

PROFESSIONAL
TROUBLEMAKER



with **LUVVIE AJAYI JONES**

Professional Troublemaker with Luvvie Ajayi Jones

Own Your Success (with Nicole Walters) - Episode 09

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Welcome to the Professional Troublemaker Podcast! This is the place where we help you cultivate the courage, authenticity and audacity you need to use your voice, take up space and live a life that is so bold, even your wildest dreams say #goals. I'm your host, Luvvie Ajayi Jones, New York Times bestselling author, sought after speaker and side-eye sorceress bringing you thought-provoking conversations with amazing people taken action, done scary things and rocked the boat to an audacious life. Like the late, great John Lewis said, these are the kind of people who are "Never, ever afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble."

Before we jump into today's interview, know that this podcast is named after my second book, [Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual](#), which hits bookstore shelves on March 2, 2021.

With this book and with everything I do, and I'm on a mission to help a million people live audaciously. To do that, they must fight their fear.

Think of it! A million people who are out there, standing on the edge of something great and need that little push of encouragement. That push to be the domino. To say the hard thing. To have the hard conversation. To kick their fear to the curb and step into the life they've been dreaming of.

And that is what writing this book has done for me, what it's already done for those who have had the chance to read it early - empowered people to say yes to things they were previously saying no to. Empowered people to have tough conversations they weren't going to have before. People have asked for raises and promotions and gotten them after reading this book and finding the courage to speak up. The domino effect of what has been happening when a few people have decided not to live in the realm of fear has been amazing - think of what could happen if a million people stopped letting fear be the first factor in their decision making?

An audacious mission like this can't happen without you, so I need your help to get this book in the hands of people who need it. Buy a copy of *Professional Troublemaker* for yourself, as a gift for your friend who needs to start living audaciously. I know it will change your life like it's changed mine and I know it will change the lives of a million people who can create a domino effect that won't be stopped. Preorder Professional Troublemaker (hardcover or audiobook) now at PROFESSIONALTROUBLEMAKERBOOK.com or wherever you buy books.

My guest today on Professional Troublemaker is the brilliant, hilarious [Nicole Walters](#). Nicole is the founder and CEO of a multi-million-dollar personal development and business education empire. After

quitting her corporate job on livestream in front of 10,000 people Nicole uses all the skills and knowledge she learned in the corporate world and specializes in business development training and strategic coaching for emerging entrepreneurs and established business owners. She works with everyone from stay-at-home parents to small business owners, and her transformative resources help everyday entrepreneurs build a legacy they will be proud of.

I knew I was going to love this conversation, because I love Nicole, but listen...you are going to completely fall out with the gems this woman is blessing us with in this episode. Just effortless gems dropping all around. You see her out here running her business and on her new show on USA Networks, but in this episode she shared some amazing stories I'd never heard from her before. How she's been this professional, gifted entrepreneur from the time she was small, how she strategically mapped out her corporate career before quitting her job to step into her real purpose as the CEO and Founder of [Inherit Learning Company](#). And I cannot wait for you to hear the story she dropped on me about her experience during [#ShareTheMicNow](#). It's too good. Let's get into this.

Conversation with Nicole Walters

LUVVIE Nicole Walters, welcome to Professional Troublemaker.

NICOLE Thank you for having me, Luvvie, I'm very excited to be here.

LUVVIE You all, I just want to let you know that Nicole showed up for this interview looking like God's anointing, okay? Looking like just a stone-cold fox. In fact, she's putting me to shame right now, just so you people know.

NICOLE Hey, I do what I can. I exfoliated, I did my eyebrows. Pandemic, no pandemic, do what is the Lord's will.

LUVVIE You see foolishness. You see foolishness.

NICOLE Right out the gate.

LUVVIE Out the gate. We can't help ourselves. We cannot help ourselves. [crosstalk 00:03:16] so tell me, what did you want to be when you were growing up?

NICOLE Oh my goodness, I only had two choices, my parents are Ghanaian... Or even three, doctor, lawyer, or engineer. [crosstalk 00:03:26].

LUVVIE Of course.

NICOLE And if I talk to them today from Ghana, they're like, "There's still time, you can have more children even, you're still young. Medical school, it's four years, you can do this one still." "Oh, really mom? Really?" So, yeah.

LUVVIE That tracks. Honestly, that tracks. This is a podcast full of failed doctors, I'm just letting you know right now. I have so many guests who've been on this podcast who were like, "Yeah, no, I was supposed to be a doctor." I am glad it didn't work out for us like that.

NICOLE Me too. Well, what's funny is, if you have those type of parents, if you're not around though, ask my mom, all over Ghana, small little village living there, "My daughter knows Oprah, but sometimes she doesn't have time for her. She can't always call her, she can't always be around her, but she's also her, she's also Oprah." I'm like, "Mom, that's not really the narrative." But it's whatever. That's African parents, they brag on you, but to your face, they're like, "One more."

LUVVIE Secret pride. They're only proud of you in secret. You find out by accident that they're proud of you-

NICOLE Always.

LUVVIE ... and you're like, "Wow, thank you for you telling me that they're proud, because I usually ain't hear that."

NICOLE It's like, that's why we have therapists. Amen.

LUVVIE Amen. Thank God for them.

NICOLE Amen. Thank God for therapy.

LUVVIE Okay? To unpack all of this. So, what was little Nicole like? Five year old, six year old Nicole, what were you like?

NICOLE Oh my gosh, probably just as annoying, precocious. I was the one who was on the playground saying, "Guys, let's form a trash bag brigade. All right. So, everyone bring trash bags from home, and we're going to take care of the planet, we're going to help out." But of course, I wasn't picking up the trash, I was delegating, always the leader, always the leader, but I got it coordinated. So, that was me when I was little. And I like to get paid, ever since I was little. I love the coin.

LUVVIE Wait, how?

NICOLE Oh my gosh, in every turn, I was always trying to negotiate. So, I was like, "Oh, I'd love to do that, but I could also do this if you wanted to throw down a little bit of cash." That was me, always negotiating.

LUVVIE What?

NICOLE Mm-hmm (affirmative) Absolutely. Even when I would go to the market for my parents, where they'd be like, "Here's some money, go to the market," I'd come back with their change, I'd show them their change, and I would say, "I'll take this as a down payment. I'll give you this, but let me keep the coins." Little by little.

LUVVIE What?

NICOLE Always. I was always looking for a way to make a coin. Always.

LUVVIE I'm trying to tell you, when people are like, "How do you find your purpose?" I'm always like, "It's typically something you were doing when you were young that somebody like beat out of you, or abused out of you, or insulted out of you." If you paid attention to who you were at five, six, seven, eight, nine, there's clues in there for what you should be doing right now.

NICOLE Yes. Yes, the foundations are there. Yes, the past leaves clues for the present.

LUVVIE That tracks. That tracks. So, when you were in high school around that time, what did you want to be at that point? Were you still a doctor?

NICOLE So, I had a sort of awakening. I thought I wanted to get into broadcast journalism, because I really like telling stories, I really like connecting with people authentically, and I had a passion for professionalism, so I really liked doing things in a formal way. So, I thought that's what I'd do. But then, my dad was like, "Eh, too competitive. Eh, it's too competitive. What makes you think you are going to go do this one, eh? Simple job, surgeon." I'm like, "Oh, because that's a simple job? That's the shift though, sir?"

 Yeah. So, I was like, "No, I'll fast track, maybe I can get into politics, maybe I'll be a lawyer." That's the direction I thought I would go in. But I ended up in Corporate America doing the financial thing, corner office, and it worked for me, but it wasn't as much interaction as I would have liked. I was that annoying coworker.

LUVVIE Yeah. So, wait, where did you go to college?

NICOLE I went to Johns Hopkins University.

LUVVIE And then, what was your major?

NICOLE Political Science. Because it's right outside of DC in Baltimore, so I really thought that I was going to end up in DC doing the lobbyist thing, the political thing like law school, that's really what I thought would happen, but it really was not. I was just not tracking for law school, it just wasn't aligned with who... I'm too nice, you know what I mean?

 I'm serious about my business, but I'm friendly. I like to hang out, I like to laugh, I like to tell jokes. And like I said, I was the annoying coworker in the cube who was always trying to chat your ear off. Yup. But it was good, corporate was good to me, it made sense. I went in financial, I went in healthcare, I was C-suite, it made sense.

LUVVIE When you graduated, you got straight into work?

NICOLE Well, I worked all through college because my parents just didn't have it, so nobody was going to be able to fund... People don't tell you that, even if you get a full ride, there's so much more that you have to pay for. So, books are 400 a semester plus-

LUVVIE Yep.

NICOLE And there's housing. Especially if you go to a school in a major city, you've got to pay for that housing near a campus, which is usually at a premium. So, there were just so many things. And I worked the entire time, which actually allowed me to fast track the corporate path because I already... When my friends were graduating with 100K in debt, I was graduating with three years of experience.

LUVVIE Yeah, come on, strong resume. See, you had your stuff together way more than most people in college. Because in college, people are just out here, just acting a fool, and you're over here building a career, okay?

NICOLE Well, not deliberately, not because I wanted to, but because my parents were like, "You are our 401(k), all right, sis? You are the 401(k) plan. So, play around if you want to, but do it on somebody else's retirement, not mine."

LUVVIE So, wait, were you the oldest sibling?

NICOLE Can't you tell I'm the oldest?

LUVVIE I can tell, that's why I was like-

NICOLE By seven years. So, my sister is seven years younger than me, so aside from taking care of my parents, I also was taking care of my sister. So, I mean, I was really spread thin in my responsibilities, but that's therapy for you.

LUVVIE That what I thought, I was like, "You sound like an older sibling who's taking care of a lot of people, because you came out the gate with like, 'I got to do this, this, this, this, this.'"

NICOLE Checkmarks. Mm-hmm (affirmative).

LUVVIE All right.

NICOLE But I'm okay with it though, it actually worked out because this is the role that I get to play in other people's lives. I'm the auntie, I'm your business auntie, I'm coming in there saying, "Listen, you may not like to hear it, but this is the truth. I'm going to cause some trouble in your fields, but you're going to make sure those coins and that bank account lines up."

LUVVIE Come on professional troublemaker, come on.

NICOLE Yes.

LUVVIE Okay. I see what you did there. Okay. I see what you did there. All right. So, you got into corporate, so you graduate, you get this nice job for somebody who's just graduated from college, what is your position?

NICOLE Right. So, I start out and I'm working as an associate, which basically means you support the people who are doing all the fancy things. And I'm working in mortgage-backed securities for a major banking institution. So, it's basically like... All you're doing is, whenever a defaulted loan comes in on a house or whatever else, your job is to do the research, look at the docs, figure out whose fault is it that this loan defaulted? Is it the bank's fault? Is it the person's fault? And catch this, it was at the time of the recession. So, I went in from reviewing eight loans a day, and I went in... That was on a Friday, went in on a Monday, there were 800 loans. And this was before anybody was talking about recession.

LUVVIE And what year was this?

NICOLE This was in 2007.

LUVVIE Oh my God.

NICOLE So, I go in there, and I'm like, "It does not seem right." I didn't even know what all the boxes were. I was like, "This couldn't possibly be." And I'm looking and it's all these defaulted loans. And one of the major banks was on the brink of filing for bankruptcy, so that's why we'd gotten this huge influx.

And so, I'm like, "What is going on here?" And no joke, on that day, I was like, "Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, I can't be in finance. I'm going to need to figure out what I'm going to do, run my own business." Because the American dream is not this 2.5 kids, this corner office, this business card, none of this, it's making sure that I can control and have options around my finances and my life. So, it was from that moment on that I said, "Look, this is just going to be a training ground for my entrepreneurial future."

LUVVIE Oh, that is wild. [crosstalk 00:11:14] no. Mm-mm (negative) no.

NICOLE Mm-mm (negative) no, no, no. I was like, "This right here, this is not it. This is not it. I'm not going to be in this office." Because also, the other side of it is, once all those loans were gone... They're going to hire up to offset, right? Because they needed help, but once those are gone, then what are you doing? You're cutting back. So, right afterwards, it's going to be... So, I was like, "No, no, no, I'm not doing this back and forth." I like a regular track, and if I can control my own money, I know where it's coming from.

LUVVIE So then, where did you go next?

NICOLE So, after that, I realized, I don't want to stay in the securities financial world, I'm going to go ahead and jump ship and go to healthcare, because healthcare is more stable. But my information around business development, around the structure of finances, is all going to be beneficial as long as I'm doing corporate healthcare. So, I started working at an international corporate healthcare firm. So, what we did was we provided health insurance for major international corporations. So, if PepsiCo wanted to send a hundred employees to Dubai to open a new office, I had to make sure that they have the right health insurance to make sure that it aligned, and if the package didn't exist, create it, all the different pieces, and make sure the number aligned.

LUVVIE Lord, you are getting the masterclass-

NICOLE Oh yeah.

LUVVIE ... in all things, business, because all this stuff I'm like, "Damn."

NICOLE Yeah, it was a lot. But what was great about it was they trusted me, you know what I mean? Which I look back on it, and I would not have hired a 23-year-old to be in charge of multimillion dollar accounts, and like, "Please, are you kidding me? I'm not flying a 20-something year old to go sit into a meeting with a PepsiCo or a Microsoft." But I guess I looked professional, I looked good in a suit. Those eyebrows, they stayed trustworthy, I guess, I don't know.

LUVVIE The eyebrows did it, and the cheekbones.

NICOLE It did it, and the cheekbones, they just saw that. So, it aligned and it worked out, and I did that for a couple of years, and I was poached by another company that wanted me to do the same thing within theirs. They didn't have an international division, it was the number one healthcare company in the US, and they were like, "Nicole, help us build one." So, we scaled from 2 million to 200 million, and we did that over the span of three, four years.

LUVVIE [crosstalk 00:13:18].

NICOLE Yeah, it was crazy. I went to my boss, he was like, "This is great." I'm hyped... You know that young 25-year-old enthusiasm where I'm like, "What next? I'm going to scale, I'm going to be everything." And my boss is like, "Oh, yeah, no, I mean, everyone else around here is, I don't know, 53, so you're pretty much just going to do what you're doing for the next couple of years, and then we'll see what happens next. I mean, keep making us money. Thanks." I was like, "Oh, no, no, no."

LUVVIE What?

NICOLE And that was when I started getting serious about the exit strategy, very serious.

LUVVIE So, what did you do first in terms of planning this exit?

NICOLE Mm-hmm (affirmative) So I've been sharing my story online. So, I've always been... Because I'm of that millennial age, which doesn't mean anything now, like you always say, I'm young old, and there's Gen Zs now.

LUVVIE Young old.

NICOLE So, I was on social, and I had just gone natural, and I'd started tracking that journey online, but I was doing that organically for me, just kind of, is my hair growing or not? Are my edges more or less robust? These are the things I needed to know.

LUVVIE Important things.

NICOLE Important things, on the side, right?

LUVVIE Yes.

NICOLE And so, in tracking that journey, I was building up an audience, and people were enjoying watching it because it was fun, but I was also making money because again, no free. So, brands were wanting to work with me because they recognized my corporate professionalism. They knew that I knew how to pitch, they knew that I... When we were done with an activation or any type of marketing, I would send them reporting. They knew that I understood insights, and analytics, and long before anyone was teaching this stuff online. So, I was making like 35K on the side while working in corporate, just running my little blog with like next to no followers.

So, that was the light bulb moment, because all my blogger friends were like, "I'm not making that type of money, how are you even getting this? Who are you? I have 100,000 followers, how do you get this?" And I'm like, "I pitch myself, girl. I went corporate." And then, one thing led to the next and I launched my business education firm.

LUVVIE So, you quit your job in a very high-profile way.

NICOLE Yeah. Yeah.

LUVVIE Walk us through that story of how you quit your job on a grand stage.

NICOLE Yeah. I mean, the original intention... I have to say this for every African auntie that may be listening, the original intention was just to call quietly and then follow up, and be like, "Hey guys, so I quit my job." But what had happened was-

LUVVIE What had happened was-

NICOLE What happened was, I went on the internet to say, "Okay guys, today is the day I'm quitting. You've been tracking me, sort of building my journey, you know I have money in the bank, I think I'm ready to jump ship." And everyone was like, "Stop playing, stop playing. You're not going to show us all the stuff and drop us off now, keep us on the line, call, and we want to hear how it goes."

So, I text The Hubbin... My husband is an attorney, I text him and I'm like, "Hey, so, I need you to look up real quick if this is even legal." Just because realistically you can't always record both sides of conversations, all of that. And so, he was like, "Yeah, it's fine, you just can't do it on speaker, you can only record." Because my boss at the time was in Chicago, and I was in Maryland.

LUVVIE [crosstalk 00:16:13].

NICOLE Right, exactly. So, he was like, "Based on the laws, you can do it, you just can't hear his side of the conversation." So, I got on the phone and you can hear the muffled sort of hmmm..hmmm... but you can't hear the words. And I quit my job and I had to, because the next day, I was headed to Tennessee to do an event for a brand that had booked me as part of my hair blog, and I had a

full docket of clients. So, that next day, I made something like \$8,000. So, I was like, "Oh, I have to quit. I don't have a choice. I have to quit my job." So, that was it, I quit my job.

LUVVIE So, what did you even say [crosstalk 00:16:46]?

NICOLE In that moment... I got to send you this video, Luvvie, in this moment-

LUVVIE Please do.

NICOLE ... all I could think to myself... So, my heart's racing, you know what I mean? I'm racing, and not because I felt like I couldn't do it, but because I was worried he was going to say something left like, "Well, thank God, get your stuff." I do not know, and I got these people on here, and I'm like, "Oh man, I'd love to not have them on here, but also, I said I would." So, I felt like I was in a bind. But it worked out, you know what I mean?

I said to him, "This job just really isn't feeding my soul and I have this opportunity to do something that's making me money, and I love it. It's making me money, and it gives me joy. I'm helping people pay school fees, and I'm helping people pay for summer camp, and put down payments on homes, this is really... And the way I'm doing it is in integrity, it feels right." So, my boss... I was good until he said this to me, he said, "If you love what you're doing and you're making money doing it, then why are you wasting time doing anything else?" From my boss. And I was just like-

LUVVIE The boss.

NICOLE I was like, "Okay." And then, a little later in the conversation, he was like, "Sometimes I wish I had the guts to do what you're doing." And this guy has like 25, 30 years of experience on me. And I was like, "I'm not going to wait 30 years to find out that this makes sense, I'm out of here." So, I quit.

LUVVIE I love that because, holy smokes, it could have gone left, but the reason why it didn't go left is because you had already proven you were valuable, that you do amazing work. So, he had no reason to be upset at you.

NICOLE Oh yeah...

LUVVIE If you were a trash employee-

NICOLE Oh, right, it would have been a different story. Now his big concern was, am I going to a competitor? Because they knew... How they always say, "If your man cheated in order to get you, you might be worried about cheating." They were concerned, they were like, "We know how we got you, so we want to make sure that's not how we lose you." So, when I told him, "No, I'm not going to a competitor," they were like, "Oh, okay, well, then, what are you doing? Tell me about it." And he was really supportive, and I'm grateful to this day because I needed that. So, it was really helpful.

LUVVIE And that is how you started [Inherit Learning Company](#).

NICOLE Yes, [Inherit Learning Company](#). So, we're now a multi-million-dollar company headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. We have 20 employees with full benefits, full health care, 401(k), all that good stuff. We are fully debt-free, women-owned, minority-owned business, and we're thriving, helping more people every single day. It's unbelievable. Sometimes I look around, I'm like, "I can't believe this is my life. It's crazy."

LUVVIE How many years has it been?

NICOLE It's been six years now. But I always like to say that six years seems quick in the digital world, but I came into it with over a decade of experience. So, the truth is, it looks like a microwave minute, but it's Crockpot success. So, it's 16 years.

LUVVIE Looks like a microwave minute, but it is Crockpot success. Come on and drop these gems on the people.

NICOLE It's the truth. It's the truth.

LUVVIE Yes. Yes.

NICOLE It's not rice cooker Jollof, nobody wants that.

LUVVIE Nobody wants that.

NICOLE Nobody's wants that.

LUVVIE Nobody is here for that.

NICOLE It's on the pot with the foil, slow cook.

LUVVIE The Party Jollof-

NICOLE Party Jollof.

LUVVIE ... with the smokey bottoms.

NICOLE Yes, proper.

LUVVIE Yes. Yes. And you have managed to do it. First of all, the field is officially, ridiculously saturated.

NICOLE [crosstalk 00:20:02] saturated.

LUVVIE I must have a petty moment. I'm tired of people teaching things they have not done-

NICOLE They don't know.

LUVVIE ... purely because there's money in it. I'm seeing people teaching how you become a millionaire when you're not a millionaire yet. I see people teaching how to write a book when you don't have a best-selling book.

NICOLE Not one.

LUVVIE Just not one.

NICOLE Mm-hmm (affirmative) And it's tough. I think that just in keeping with all that you've got going on, the way you've always inspired me is, you say, "To make trouble," and when I first came... "Make good trouble at that." And that's what makes me so excited about your book coming out, [Professional Troublemaker](#), because it really is an example and a guideline. I've been blessed... Thankfully, you let me read an early copy of it, and it really has inspired me. Because in the beginning, when I tell you, Luvvie, people were uncomfortable with my troublemaking status, and somewhere inside me... And you talk about this in the book, listening to that self that knows to be courageous, I always knew that good trouble made sense because it was in alignment with what I needed to do.

So, not only was I... Like you say, being a fear-fighter, fighting that fear within, but it actually is the reason I have... Everything in your book that you talk about is the reason why I have the business now, because I wasn't afraid of being a troublemaker in a saturated space where people already said, "Do it like this." Instead, I was like, "No, what you're doing is wrong." And I know that may be uncomfortable to hear someone say, but it's not right. There's an actual way to do it. You do need to pay attention to your taxes, and they do matter. You do need to have contracts, and they do matter.

You are a lawyer, don't speak on that stuff. And that was something that people weren't doing in this space, it was all marketing and flash. And I'm glad to know that I caused good trouble, because it challenged people to step it up and be better.

LUVVIE And you do, you are constantly showing like, all right, it ain't just the fun and games, you need structure.

NICOLE No, no, no, no, no. Yes.

LUVVIE A lot of people think, especially creative people, think that all you have to do is have the gift and the talent, no, no. Your gift is like 20 or 30% of the whole thing, and the rest is business structures and know-how that a lot of people do not have.

NICOLE Mm-hmm (affirmative) People forget that if Beyonce didn't have a team, she'd only sing in the shower, okay? There's someone who gets her-

LUVVIE Come on.

NICOLE ... where she needs to go every single day, whether... And don't minimize the power of a team. I always tell people that... Sometimes they're like, "Well, I want to be an entrepreneur, I want to be an..." Maybe you're intrapreneur. Maybe your skillset is to lend your talents towards

somebody who is suited for that platform but recognize that you are essential. Beyoncé all day knows that she would never make it to stage without somebody to glue, that lays front on right.

LUVVIE Amen.

NICOLE Okay? That person is doing the work of the Lord.

LUVVIE Amen.

NICOLE So, it's like, these are real things. There's somebody out there who's powdering and greasing those legs so that they can shine like the top of the Chrysler Building. God bless that soul. You know what I mean? These are real talents.

LUVVIE Because the leg moisturizer is undefeated.

NICOLE Yes, Amen. Amen. So, everybody has an essential role, once you figure out what that looks like, it's your job to seek out the people around you to support you operating in your area of excellence.

LUVVIE Zone of genius.

NICOLE Zone of genius.

LUVVIE I was talking to somebody who was like, "A lot of people have a zone of competence, and they tend to live in the zone of competence." Just because you can do it does not mean you should do it.

NICOLE Absolutely.

LUVVIE And then, there's a lot of people who do zone of excellence, you're really great at it actually, but then there's your zone of genius, which is where you're supposed to live in.

NICOLE The whole time.

LUVVIE The problem is that creatives end up living in zones of incompetence too, okay?

NICOLE That's true.

LUVVIE You're doing the shit that's not even in your realm, it's not even in your lane, don't even touch it.

NICOLE Yes. And shifting back and forth like, "Oh, this isn't working, I need to do something different." And it's like, no, no, no, you got to understand that sometimes you have to stick with it. I mean, Luvvie, I'm telling you, when I've been watching your journey with this next book and seeing you pour your heart out into it, I've been so blown away because it's a consistent... And we know you're a creative because you have many businesses. People don't know, they may have just found you at the podcast, or just found you at [#ShareTheMicNow](#), but you've been old to this, you've been doing this for a while, and you've gone through many iterations before Professional

Troublemaker. And the thing that stands out for me and watching you that really aligns with my corporate background is consistency, even when it's hard.

I mean, the tears in writing this book, the days where you're like, "My creative mind says, 'Go launch a shoe line today.'" You know what I mean? My creative mind says, "Someone complimented me on my hair color, I need a hair color collection." This is what I should be doing right now. And you're saying to yourself, "No, no, no, my creative mind says whatever it wants to say, but my good mind says, "Sit down and write this book, because God has called me to do it."

LUVVIE That's it!

NICOLE We're all grateful to you for getting it done, because there's a lesson in that alone.

LUVVIE No, that's it. Actually, there was a point Nicole had to gather me in August to be like, "Luvvie, focus, why are you doing this? That don't make any sense for you." And I was like, "Cancel it all. Yup. It makes sense." And for me, that was such a great moment to be like, "Okay, that's a distraction that I thought I should be doing."

NICOLE Right.

LUVVIE That's a distraction [inaudible 00:25:25]-

NICOLE Well, I look at that now and I'm so glad that you didn't branch off into new ventures, because you never know what God has for you around the corner. And so, if you are operating in your zone of genius, like you say, odds are the world's going to rise to meet you, there are opportunities unseen, and you just want to be your best self when they arrive. And Luvvie, I mean, you got Beyoncé sending you packages, I mean, you don't have the time right now. I need to see you, your full African self standing in the winter enrobed in Beyoncé, okay? This is not just... It's inspirational, okay? So, these are real things. And if you've been spending your time doing anything else, I mean, really, you would have missed out. So, this is good. It's good for all of us.

LUVVIE I'm already stressed, and Nicole will text me and be like, "I need to see a world where Luvvie successful, because I need my girls to see Luvvie being a success."

NICOLE That's right.

LUVVIE And I'd be like-

NICOLE That's right.

LUVVIE ... "Oh, my God [crosstalk 00:26:19]."

NICOLE Yes. We have to grow up in a world like that, because my girls need to see that the Luvvies are successful, that the Myleiks are successful. I want them to see that it's not just the Susans, and the Rebeccas-

LUVVIE Yes,

NICOLE ... and the Jordans. I want them to see that it's women who look like them, who sound like them, who've decided to be consistent and challenge themselves to be something more, that is the world that we're in. So, even if we're not all operating in the exact same area, or even if we may not all have the exact same life and style, and do everything exactly the same way, ultimately, my kids need to see that variety, because that's truly where they're going to find where they fit in, where they can make some good trouble.

Imagine being in an online space where people's foolishness doesn't make you want to fight the air. That might sound impossible with your current choices for social media, but I was sick of wading through nonsense to find like-minded people, so I created my own online community. And if you are the kind of person who is striving to be a professional troublemaker and fight fear, we need you to join us in that community, because you need people to cheer you on.

[LuvvNation](#) is my online community and app that is a safe space in a dumpster fire world. It's the place for the most thoughtful, funny, most chill deficient people on these interwebs. We're a community that comes together to make each other better with curated conversations, opportunities to connect, and challenges to help us transform and do better in every area of our lives. So, I want you to come in there, join us. Become a citizen of [LuvvNation](#). So go to [luvvnation.com](#), that's [luvvnation.com](#) L-U-V-V-N-A-T-I-O-N. Download the app in the App Store or on Android, it's on iOS and Android and come on through! All right. Back to the podcast.

LUVVIE Let's talk about the children.

NICOLE [crosstalk 00:27:05].

LUVVIE Nicole has a family-

NICOLE Dynamic.

LUVVIE ... that includes three girls who she adopted, we'll get into that, and one manny-

NICOLE Ooh Lord.

LUVVIE ... who is everything to me. [crosstalk 00:27:19].

NICOLE Come and collect him. You can have him. Come and collect him.

LUVVIE Yo, besides the fact that Nicole is this fricking business boss, she's just such a dynamic person. I be living my best life watching... You all have probably seen a Nicole Walters video that has gone viral at some point, Nicole is like a shapeshifter, right? So, now let's talk about these three adopted daughters, and how they shifted your life in the last, what? Five, six years?

NICOLE Yeah. Five, six years. So, it's crazy because they're sort of the very robust track of building a business, right? That's plenty to talk about. But simultaneously, I think like most Black women, we wanted all and we're going to go for it all. We're not going to sacrifice our personal life in order to chase the business, we want to feel like we're well-rounded. So, for me, I was married for seven years and we were putting off having kids for a while, because people check for your uterus, and you be like, "Hey look, just because I got married doesn't mean I'm popping them out right away, I got things."

So, we were having a good time, and on one night after date night, we drove down a street in Baltimore and it was a little late, and we saw this woman panhandling with her daughter. And we didn't know what was next outside of just stopping to help at the moment, but we found out that they were in need, and she had two more daughters at home, and I just offered mentoring. I had a blog at the time, so I was like, "Sure, I'll help. I'll mentor, pick up the girls after school, take them out, listen to them, give them another perspective." But it became very clear very quickly that the need was deeper than that, so we just kept trying to do the next right thing.

And then, what happened was, a month or so in, their mother told us she would be incarcerated, and we knew that... And their mother is very much still in our life. So, in getting to know the family, it was one of those things where it's a societal thing, from the beginning, the mother was not supported, do you know what I mean?

LUVVIE Yeah.

NICOLE Her life just took a turn and it was one thing after another, after another. And so, unfortunately, where she is now, it is what it is, but it doesn't have to be that for the girls. So, for us, that was kind of how we stepped in. And one thing led to another, we ended up having full custody, and now we are mom and dad to these three incredible, incredible girls.

LUVVIE Who I feel like I've watched grow up-

NICOLE You have.

LUVVIE ... because of the internet.

NICOLE You have, literally.

LUVVIE Puffin was this tall-

NICOLE She was three.

LUVVIE And her little pig tails take me out.

NICOLE Yes. She was three. And now she is nine talking about some... "I don't really wear pink, black's my favorite color, because black goes with everything." And I was like, "Little girl, I need you to slow down right now, I'm not ready for this." She's like, "Yeah, I have a style. [inaudible 00:30:01] So, mom, can I talk to your stylist, because I just feel like he would get my style."

LUVVIE Ma'am.

NICOLE I'm not even kidding.

LUVVIE Ma'am.

NICOLE I'm not even kidding.

LUVVIE Ma'am.

NICOLE These kids.

LUVVIE Ma'am, you don't have a style, you're nine.

NICOLE You don't have a style, your style is unicorn. That's what I call your style. That's it for right now. So, yeah, she's grown up. And we always joke about all the internet aunties. It takes a village, and I've been blessed, everybody on the internet has watched these girls grow, and they've piped in here and there, where appropriate, with respect to boundaries saying like, "Hey, this is the type of car seat you need." Or, "This is the type of potty seat holder you need.", And what's great is the show is an extension of that. They get to really see what it's like on top of what's been happening on social media. So, it's pretty cool.

LUVVIE Yeah. By the way, you all, slight work. Nicole is the star of a new show on USA called "[She's the Boss](#)" with her and the rest of the family. And we have this... First of all, their names on social media is different, you will find out their real names... You find out on social media if you follow their account, which you'll find out what Puffin's real name is, Mid-Tiny's real name is, The Hubbin. And can you talk about Eddie please? Because Eddie-

NICOLE Eddie is some middle of the mall stuff. How many times have you ever been taken by a spray paint shirt in the middle of the mall? That's basically what happened. I went to the mall and I founded Eddie, and I brought him home. And Eddie sure enough, he thought that I was a housewife. So, he thought he was being hired to be my professional best friend, and I was like... Could you imagine, Luvvie, knowing me, thinking that you are hiring someone to go on lunch dates with, and knowing how I work, Eddie was shell-shocked, ok he was like, "Oh, it's a job." So, the show is hilarious because you see a lot of that, of Eddie kind of forgetting that this is not just some cool-

LUVVIE Employee.

NICOLE ... employee hanging out relationship, there's real work to be done. But he became like family, and we love him. And he's crazy, and he's lighthearted, and keeping him in line is just one of my many jobs that I do.

LUVVIE And Eddie, when he puts on his turban and his apron, I'm like, "Who and why?" And never stop.

NICOLE Oh, Luvvie, don't you know that those aprons... And everyone will see on the show, he has this like signature yellow apron he wore, those aprons were in a bin in my garage, okay? They were

from an event that I did many years prior, where I had people manning my booth wearing those aprons. And Eddie found them one day, and I come out from a call or whatever else, I walk in, he's wearing it, and he was like, "I just feel like I'm more productive with this on." And that's it, and he's worn it ever since. This was Eddie. This was Eddie. So, it wasn't like a situation where I was like, "Oh, you have to wear an apron or do uniform, he just feels more productive when he's wearing ruffles.

LUVVIE When he's wearing ruffles.

NICOLE That's his style. And also, he's 24, don't let the height fool you. He is a 24-year-old man. So, he is young and silly, Morehouse grad, good kid.

LUVVIE Oh, My husband is a Morehouse grad.

NICOLE Oh-oh.

LUVVIE Morehouse grads are obsessed with each other.

NICOLE Yes, they are. They're really brothers. They really, really are. It's been interesting to also raise him through that, because he came in his sophomore year. So, I was like, "Hey, we got to redirect you, Atlanta is a lot of fun, but Eddie, you got to do that work." So, I'm his mom boss, is how he calls it.

LUVVIE You are. You are-

NICOLE [crosstalk 00:33:21].

LUVVIE Because you be trying to get Eddie together, and you and Eddie be arguing about the most random things.

NICOLE All the time, all the time. God bless him.

LUVVIE And I'm looking forward to watching it on the show, because I'm like, "The pure shenanigans that I know will exist behind the business of it all."

NICOLE Yes. Yes. I mean, and it's cool. People do get to see me in the office kind of balancing... The family part of it extends to the office, because my husband is the general counsel for my company. So, I'm dealing with him coming to the office, Eddie is like, "Oh, I'll meet you in the office to go over such and such." And I'm like, "Don't! I live at home, I'll see at home." He'll come into the office and be like, "I wanted to review all these things." And I'm like, "No, I'm with clients, Eddie."

So, it's just like... You get to see that whole dynamic, and I'm excited. USA Network really did something special by putting a Black woman in a lead role during Black History Month, and Women's History Month, and I'm excited, every Thursday people are going to get to see what it's really like.

LUVVIE Yo, how do you... This question is interesting, but it's like, how do you make sure you stay grounded through all of this imbalance? Because there's a lot on your plate.

NICOLE Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. I mean, one of the things that I do, which I scream at you left and right to do for yourself, is a self-care sabbatical, right? So, a self-care sabbatical is every three months taking three to five days and being nothing for no one, you are nobody's wife, you are nobody's mentor, you are nobody's coach, you are nobody's mother, you are nobody's anything, all you are is what you are to yourself.

And for me as a Christian, it's also a spiritual time. How am I going to hear from God if I'm always moving and listening to everybody else? So, it allows me to stop and just really sit there and give thanks to even reach that moment, and also get direction for where I need to go next, as well as rest. So, these self-care sabbaticals are essential for me, they're harder in a pandemic, but I still make space, I carve out room, because it's how I'm my best for everyone else.

LUVVIE That is a major key, and I think I might have to institute that as a policy, because, my God, after, after all the things you have to get done, after all the talking, because right now you're doing heavy press run... I am too, because of the book dropping, you're about to be doing it one of these here days too for other projects-

NICOLE Yes.

LUVVIE ... and you're always doing something new, that recharge is super real.

NICOLE Oh yes. And I put it on the calendar top of the year. So, Luvvie, listen, I believe that... When your New York Times Bestseller is announced, because we already know it's been received in Jesus' name.

LUVVIE Amen.

NICOLE Okay?

LUVVIE Amen.

NICOLE But when it's announced, I want you to be in a position with a cocktail in your hand somewhere resting, sunning yourself on somebody's beach. That's what you deserve because you go so hard, and that's what so many of us deserve. Especially as Black women, as women in general, we are carrying so much of the load, and we don't feel like we're entitled to take that space. So, I take that space in advance, top of the year, January, I'm like, "Put it on the calendar, last week of every single quarter, I am not to be found." So, it does not get moved-

LUVVIE Yes.

NICOLE ... everything works around that. It's a week that does not exist on the calendar.

LUVVIE Yes.

NICOLE Don't even book anything, it doesn't exist.

LUVVIE Major keys. I got to do that. I've got to do that. Because I'm like, "Oh my God, I'm tired of people."

NICOLE It's not too late.

LUVVIE You're building wealth, how are you-

NICOLE Yes.

LUVVIE And a lot of those of us who are visible, prominent, forever students, who are living on social and building our lives and wealth and everything, it looks glamorous. For you, what is the thing that keeps you moving through it, because we're now in rarefied air?

NICOLE Am I in rarefied... I still go to Walmart. I'm like, "Am I rarefied air? Am I?"

LUVVIE No, Nicole will have on a Walmart t-shirt-

NICOLE I sure will.

LUVVIE And some Balenciaga slides because versatility. Versatility, you hear me?

NICOLE Because high-low fabulous.

LUVVIE High-low.

NICOLE Category is [inaudible 00:37:19]. That's me. No, it's true. I've never been one, and I always... I think that that's... Speaking of more trouble causing, I've never been one to take pictures in my closet, surrounded by bags or things like that. You won't catch me laid out on top of a Lamborghini. You won't catch me with five or six cars in front of-

LUVVIE Correct.

NICOLE I live a debt-free life. And not only is my life debt free, but it's never been on loans, and it's never been on cards. And on top of that, my business has seven figures in working capital, that's money in the bank to pay my business. So, I am my own bank. So, these are the things that, for me, at least, in terms of humility, I'm never subject to trying to impress others, or subject to what other people's expectations are, and the Bible talks about this. It talks about not being in debt, because in debt isn't just to the bank or the people you own, but it's also in debt to society's images and perspectives, and certain styles of marketing, and all that stuff.

So, yeah, it can be uncomfortable to hear, but the truth is, don't you want to have the freedom to be able to be yourself and feel consistent in that? And that comes with living your life and building your wealth a certain way. So, doing that, it meant that I drove a car with 90,000 miles on it with a million dollars in the bank. I had a car with 90,000 miles on it and some check engine lights, because it still went, okay? That Honda started up, okay? And I was going to drive it, and I

was okay with it. And it meant saying, "Okay, my roof needs done, but what am I going to do first?" I made decisions and I still do.

And I just want to be part of that narrative. And I know that it challenges some people, because it's uncomfortable and it's not popular, but that's the narrative that I hope I can drive in the future, is that there's humility and pride that comes with knowing that your life is truly secured, and it's something you can pass on to future generations.

LUVVIE And how do you make sure you are always operating from the place of abundance, not scarcity?

NICOLE Oh, wow. I mean, I still feel moments of scarcity, I still worry, where I'll say, "If I don't do this, what will happen? Or couldn't I push myself to get one more interview in." Or things like that. It does happen, but part of that is also who I surround myself with. I've got people around me that are constantly examples of more to come. So, I mean, I remember, Luvvie, when your book first came out, and people are still talking about it because it was that great of a book. And not to mention that the people around you... I mean, people celebrated you as if that was the only book you wrote, you know what I mean? I read both, the second one is better, you know what I mean?

LUVVIE Yes, facts.

NICOLE That the second one is better, and guess what? The third one, the fourth one, and when you hit 70, 80, there's going to be a memoir, okay? That is going to be a movie-

LUVVIE Amen.

NICOLE ... that's going to be Oscar winning. We're trying to EGOT out here, the Emmy-

LUVVIE Yes,

NICOLE ... the Grammy, the Oscar, the Tony, so knowing this, right? Knowing this, it's just important to have the right people around you that will always say, "Look, there's so much more to come, be excellent where you are, and be sure that everything that God has for you, you will receive."

LUVVIE That's a gem. That's a gem. And people don't realize, Nicole is one of my village members, okay?

NICOLE [crosstalk 00:40:38] Stay in the text, come on, you can do this. This is going to be great. How can I help? Bother me-

LUVVIE She is-

NICOLE Bother me please.

LUVVIE She literally will tell me to bother her. And you've been one of the people who've reminded me and inspired me to ask for more, in terms of, a lot of us will do this isolated. A lot of what we're going through, we don't have people who we can go to that's like, "What's the way to get through this thing?"

NICOLE No, it's true.

LUVVIE Because many of us didn't come from really rich parents.

NICOLE That's right.

LUVVIE We didn't come from parents who had their own companies. So, we're building the life that we want to see as we're going along. So, to have people like you next to me, it's so cool to get be like, "Okay, question, about this big dollar thing." Does that make sense?

NICOLE Right.

LUVVIE And being able to have that real transparent conversation. For you, what role has your village played in your success, in your life right now?

NICOLE Well, I've been really blessed because I keep a tight circle, so the people in my circle are people who reflect the integrity and values that I have. So, you're not going to have me... I wouldn't ask someone to... So, I'm working on my book now and... Just to keep letting you guys know exactly the type of person Luvvie is. Luvvie knew that I was working on my book, and Luvvie is like, "If you need help, you better ask me. Don't act like you can't. This is what I do well. This is my place. You want to tell me about numbers? I'm going to tell you about this book." So, I'm just letting you know that it's true, if you have the right people in your circle, they'll act like that first, and then two, also making sure that they have a life that's important.

So, Luvvie is very private about her personal life, and she cherishes her family. It's not just a, "Oh, I have a family and it's important." It's not just marketing, she cherishes the people that are close to her. And so, that is someone I can take advice from, because that's a value for me. And I think too often when we think about, "Oh, all these mentors, all these things," we look at maybe the singular thing that they've done that appeals to us, instead of realizing that the ancillary things, all the things that are around it, also are relevant.

Because if somebody out there is a billionaire, but they have a crap marriage, or somebody out there is a billionaire, but their kids all hate them, then you want to be really careful about doing what they did to get their billion dollars, if having a good marriage and having great kids... Give me 500 million and a happy marriage and kids, and you can keep that other 500 million. I don't need that type of billion.

LUVVIE Amen.

NICOLE Not all money is good money, and not all money is God money. So, when you're building your community, make sure you're surrounded by those types of people, and, Luvvie, you're that for me, for sure.

LUVVIE Not all money is good money, and not all money is God money, and not all money is your money.

NICOLE Yes. Listen. Be willing to say no. People don't say no, they think they got to say yes to every dollar. I love saying no, it's my favorite. I built up my money so I can say no all day. People come in with sponsor deals, and I'm like, "No."

LUVVIE No.

NICOLE People come to me like, "Let's do a collaboration." It's a no, oh, my gosh, nos, collective nos. I don't work with just anybody, I don't claim just anybody, and it's because I want to be like Oprah. I want my name to change stock markets. And the way that that happens is if you think about that in advance. You can't lend your name to anyone else, it's the most valuable thing about me, not my business knowledge, not my bank account, but my integrity and my name.

NICOLE Amen.

LUVVIE And so, that's the thing that I cherish and protect more than anything else, especially with alignment with mentors, friends, you name it. Yes. Who are you in conversation with? I'm very specific about that. I stopped doing panels, Nicole.

NICOLE Listen, because-

LUVVIE [crosstalk 00:44:00].

NICOLE Well, I ask-

LUVVIE [crosstalk 00:44:01].

NICOLE I'm like, "I can't do it. Who all going to be there?" Who all going to be there?

LUVVIE Who all going to be there?

NICOLE Has a whole new meaning. It's not just about the cookout anymore, it's about who else is going to be there? And what people don't know sometimes, because we always keep it real on this podcast, is half the people on your panel that are saying they're seven figure earners, they've come to me knocking at my door asking how they can cross six figures. So, you're here thinking that you are learning from the best of the best... And they may have great advice, but I've literally been invited to panels with people who I've paid their rent, Luvvie. They've come to me and asked me to pay their rent because they did not have funds. And then, they took a year to get back to me.

So, it's one of those things where it's like, this space is super tiny, I have worked with more people than they know, but I'm head down focused on what I'm doing, but be proud of your no, because your no is going to be your biggest protector sometimes.

LUVVIE There were a few gems in there, and the piece about the name is especially important. If you have \$0 in the bank, but your name stands up-

NICOLE Yes.

LUVVIE ... you have everything you need.

NICOLE You will always make money.

LUVVIE Always go make money. You can always ask somebody for money and they'll give it to you without question, and that's where the trust comes in. And you know where I really like... What really kind of quantified that thing for me was [#ShareTheMicNow](#).

NICOLE Yes. Yes.

LUVVIE Can I tell you? That experience changed my life in ways that I'm not even sure I've processed yet.

NICOLE I'm so grateful to you, Luvvie, by the way, so people know, and I'm going to say it out loud, say it on a platform. Luvvie invited me to that opportunity, that was something that... And you don't even know about the back end, let me tell you the backend. You want to hear how God used you?

LUVVIE Let me see.

NICOLE So, Luvvie invited me to the [#ShareTheMicNow](#) Campaign, and at the time, I was like, "I'm really busy, I'm scared, and all these people are fancy." You know what I mean? I'm a regular person. And Luvvie is like, "Stop playing, come on." And it was one of those times, you're listening to people, how they see you versus how you see yourself. I fought the fear, I overcame the imposter syndrome, just like it says to do in *Professional Troublemaker*, and I said, "Yes." Well, being on that campaign, the person I was partnered with, Hilarie Burton, became a really good friend of mine. And she was on *One Tree Hill*, she had all these shows, and she's still doing amazing work. She's on *The Walking Dead* now.

Well, she partnered me with a management team that partnered me with CAA as my agent, within a month of [#ShareTheMicNow](#), I had every single major agency in Hollywood sitting down for meetings with me to sign me as a client. So, if I had not done [#ShareTheMicNow](#), I don't know... If I hadn't said yes in that one moment where I didn't feel like I was ready, I would not have had the team to help me do this very TV show. So, Luvvie, God used you.

LUVVIE Did you see my mouth has dropped?

NICOLE I know. I'm telling you, people, buy the book. If you can't have a Luvvie, you better get this book, you know what I mean? You better get this book-

LUVVIE Nicole-

NICOLE ... and watch the show, because it's an example of what the outcome can be, if you just say yes.

LUVVIE Ooh.

NICOLE Mm-hmm (affirmative).

LUVVIE Listen-

NICOLE It all comes together.

LUVVIE I didn't know that.

NICOLE Yes.

LUVVIE I'm blown. I'm blown.

NICOLE Yes. Yes.

LUVVIE And let me tell you how you actually presented that opportunity. So, first of all, [#ShareTheMicNow](#) blew my mind because it was a massive experiment for us. It was this wild... We were just like, "Let's try it."

NICOLE Yeah, see what happens.

LUVVIE We thought we'd get 10 people to agree. This idea that we got June 2nd, that we executed June 10th, end up with 108 people-

NICOLE [crosstalk 00:47:29].

LUVVIE ... who said yes to us without question, that's the part that was crazy. We were like, "Hey, we want to do this thing where we're going to pair you, white person, with you, Black person. You all don't know each other, but you don't even know who you're going to end up getting, just trust us. And you all were like, "Okay." You all asked no questions. The only question was like-

NICOLE And total discretion. Total discretion, total confidentiality, total leaning in and trust. It was unbelievable, unbelievable.

LUVVIE Everything about it was unbelievable. The fact that a lot of the people we paired together are doing things together-

NICOLE Still.

LUVVIE ... that we will find out after... Some people became besties, some people are like, "Oh, we FaceTime every time, we've done business together."

NICOLE Absolutely.

LUVVIE So, to hear this Hilarie story, you and Hilarie Burton?

NICOLE Oh yeah. Yeah. I mean, it's tremendous. And when I tell you... So, I know all things about business, right? So, my company, I could run it all day. I am not Hollywood, do you know what I mean?

LUVVIE Right.

NICOLE Anyone who meets me knows I'm like this in person, Luvvie, I'm like this in... I'm a mess, I'm a joker, I like to have fun.

LUVVIE That's all we do.

NICOLE That's all we do. So, when it came time... There's still a way that this world is played though. You need an agent, you need a manager, you need all these things. And understand that God is inserting people in your life now that are going to give you the tools for the things you are meant to accomplish later. And, Luvvie, when I met you... My gosh, I'll never forget the first time I met you. This is a Luvvie appreciation podcast, in case you guys did not listen. The very first time I ever met you, I only met the back of you.

So, it was at the Coterie Retreat in New Orleans, you had just finished speaking... Your book had come out at that time, it was very, very popular, it's still is, the first book, and you had just finished doing a presentation, and I was headed in, and I remember thinking to myself, "Oh, I got to meet Luvvie because she's going to be here. And her book came out, I just want to tell her congratulations, whatever."

So, I get down there getting ready to do it, and all I see is you walking down the hall, right? Just walking down the hall and I see your back, and I'm like... I remember stopping in that moment and thinking to myself, "Should I just go stop her? Or should I go?" I had a fat moment where I was like, "Ah, she too far. She's too far me to run. I'm going to just let her go. I'm sure I'll see her again. [inaudible 00:49:38] I'm not going to run and sweat before my speech." But that was the first time I met you-

LUVVIE Wow.

NICOLE ... from the back, and sure enough, we met face to face later on in Cancun. So just various times, and having the boldness of being able to say like, "Look, I respect and admire you, Luvvie, I do, but I'm also out here doing good work also. And if there's something you've kept me in mind, if there's a way I can help you, let me know how I can help, because I'm there for you." And then, here we are. Ultimately, I didn't know that watching your back that day would end up leading to me having the right team to help me launch this show, which is getting so much traction. Every Thursday, people are going to be able to watch how I built this whole thing, but everybody's lent themselves to really making it happen. So, thank you, Luvvie.

LUVVIE My God, I'm blown. This is like the... Oh my God, this podcast, I swear. Finding out. And I think that's also why we have to honor our calling and the random things, random ideas that we have-

NICOLE I know.

LUVVIE ... because you don't know what domino effect it will have, right?

NICOLE Mm-hmm (affirmative) you never know.

LUVVIE You also doing the thing that you are compelled to do is being placed, because you are being used as a vessel to help somebody else, or help somebody point somebody else towards where they're supposed to be.

NICOLE Yes.

LUVVIE And one of my favorite prayers is, let my helpers find me.

NICOLE Amen.

LUVVIE And the other one is like, let me be able to receive their help.

NICOLE Yes, that part though. Please, Lord, check my ego, give me some humility so that I can say yes when it happens.

LUVVIE So, I can say yes.

NICOLE Absolutely.

LUVVIE Oh my God.

NICOLE Yes.

LUVVIE That just made my whole-

NICOLE [inaudible 00:51:17] I love it.

LUVVIE I'm fed.

NICOLE No, I mean, I love it. It's my joy because now, I get to use my gifts to lend it to other people, and including you. My job is to fork money into people's bank accounts, so that they can put it where it belongs. That's what I'm going to do. I can't dance, I can't sing... I can cook, but I can't do too many other things. So, my job is to put money into the banks of the people out there who are capable of being so much more, and also giving an example while I do it, that it's possible to do it imperfectly, to be a little messy, to be a mom who's trying to encompass it all, and I think the show is the next frontier for that. People are going to see that every single Thursday on USA Network at 10:30 PM Eastern, you're going to see what it looks like to do it all imperfectly with laughter, and humor, and love.

LUVVIE And to do it being a dope Black woman-

NICOLE Yes.

LUVVIE ... who has this family she loves, I think being that it's a service, a form of service. Your life is a form of service. And I think-

NICOLE Oh, jeez, thanks.

LUVVIE ... that in itself, just the way you show up without even doing it more than you were doing, is a form of service, because now, somebody sees that it's possible, that this dark skin. Woman... Okay? We don't look like the ambiguous girl that's on TV-

NICOLE [crosstalk 00:52:32].

LUVVIE ... we look Black. You see us, you see Black.

NICOLE Look, I've got these African cheekbones, West African cheekbones.

LUVVIE West African cheekbones.

NICOLE Okay, you see them.

LUVVIE Okay? Now, people will get to watch this West African woman living her best most purpose-driven life on television. It brings me so much joy. And that's why I'm always like, "Listen, we exist as a form of service because we didn't have this. We didn't have this."

NICOLE Absolutely.

LUVVIE We have to create these people. We have to be these people, so somebody else knows this is now possible.

NICOLE Absolutely.

LUVVIE Which for me, I'm like, "Yo, Nicole, the brilliance..." You know what I mean? The business, the authenticity, and then you have the foolishness, it's a whole package. It's a whole package.

NICOLE It's a whole package.

LUVVIE And then, the eyebrows, and the skin.

NICOLE I do what I can. I do what I can. Thank you, Luvvie.

LUVVIE The moisture, okay? The luxuriation. Okay, the moisture.

NICOLE I love this. Listen, people are literally like, "We're tuning in for the gems, we're laughing, but they're also like... You guys are like, 'You're pretty.' 'No, you're pretty.' 'No, you're pretty.'"

LUVVIE No, you're pretty.

NICOLE "No, you're pretty. No, you're great. No, you're great." Listen, gas each other up, okay?

LUVVIE Why would we not? That's what I'm saying.

NICOLE Why would we not?

LUVVIE We can do it all. And honestly, how I pick the people I'm in conversation with, I literally, just be like, "I just want other people to hear the conversation I have with my friends." I basically just record the conversations I have with my friends, because this is how we would talk to each other when we're on the phone

NICOLE Absolutely.

LUVVIE ... on another Zoom with each other.

NICOLE That's true. That's the truth. It's a fly on the wall to know that these... I think that what's great is the context, right? They recognize that, yeah, there is the uplifting stuff, there's the advice like, "Hey, no, get it together, get that vacation time, and make sure..." They hear that part, but I really hope that whenever people listen to your podcast with your friends, that they're also picking up that there's a lot of love there. And that it's authentic between strong, powerful, committed, educated women that were out here saying, "Look, we're going to be successful, and we're going to do it together."

So, I'm so grateful, I'm excited because, yeah, I got this show coming out, but your book is going to stand the test of times. I operate in seasons, but you are really operating in your legacy.

LUVVIE Amen.

NICOLE So, we're really excited to see what happens.

LUVVIE Look, and we're going to watch "[She's the Boss](#)" -

NICOLE Thank you.

LUVVIE And listen, this book, madam, I'll be calling you to make sure you're on track with your book. Listen-

NICOLE You see what happened? Be careful what you ask for. Be careful what you ask for.

LUVVIE The world needs a Nicole Walters book, that book is going to be-

NICOLE It's coming.

LUVVIE ... ridiculous.

NICOLE I mean, listen, Luvvie, honestly, the proposal is almost done, and this is... You're getting the exclusive, exclusive. And again, you're a part of it because I got my book agent because of the [#ShareTheMicNow](#) [inaudible 00:55:12], and of course, doing the work ahead of time, because you can't write a book about nothing, right? But it's like, truly, you played an integral role in pivoting me and expediting me towards my purpose. So, I'm really excited. And hopefully, because you will remain on that list, in Jesus' name, a year from now, when my book comes out, it can nudge in right next to you.

LUVVIE Come on-

NICOLE So, we'll see. So, I'm hoping.

LUVVIE ... knock me down a peg, okay? Your book will take the place of mine.

NICOLE We can switch week to week, one and two, one and two, one and two.

LUVVIE Week to week, exactly. One and two. We got to switch.

NICOLE They'll be like, "Eh, West African takeover."

LUVVIE It's true, it's happening, it's here. I'm so excited for it.

NICOLE [crosstalk 00:55:51].

LUVVIE I am so excited for it. So, you already answered my self-care question because you've talked about the self-care sabbatical. Now my final question is, what do you consider being a professional troublemaker?

NICOLE Ooh, I think being a professional troublemaker, at least in my life, has always been being willing to speak up with what may be the unpopular opinion, where you know that it's rooted in integrity, rooted in values, and will push the collective good forward.

LUVVIE Yes,

NICOLE So, that is it. That's what it is for me all day, every day.

LUVVIE Oh, look, drop the mic, drop the mic. Let the mic go, okay? Because Nicole has dropped it. She said peppah dem with words and gems.

NICOLE [crosstalk 00:56:32].

LUVVIE Hey. No, thank you. You are somebody who I have such deep respect for.

NICOLE That's so sweet, Luvvie, thank you.

LUVVIE I am so blessed. I feel-

NICOLE Thank you.

LUVVIE ... so grateful every day that God is like, "Let me bless you with-"

NICOLE Amazing.

LUVVIE ... "this team of dope people who are your soft place to land, and you are one of them." And I am like, "Yo..." I'm always cheering for you. I am so excited-

NICOLE I'm in your corner, you know it. Whatever you need, I'm always here for you. So, thank you for having me on here. Because it's a big week for both of us, so look at God, right?

LUVVIE Yes.

NICOLE And I'm just grateful to stand in this moment with you.

LUVVIE Look at God.

NICOLE So, thank you.

LUVVIE I love you, boo, more to come..

That conversation got me all the way together. “Not all money is good money, and not all money is God money.” Come on, Nicole! Be proud of your no because your no is going to be your biggest protector. Going for Crockpot success instead of microwave minutes when it comes to how we show up in this world. You know we create transcripts for every single episode of this podcast, and you're going to want to download this one just to get all the quotes.

The big jaw dropping moment for me was hearing Nicole's experience with [#ShareTheMicNow](#). Like I said – I haven't fully processed that entire experience yet, and hearing about Nicole's willingness to push through her fear and step up to that mic Hilarie shared with her and what that has led to?! Look at God, y'all! There are bigger things in store than we can ever imagine for ourselves and we cannot choose to stay small because of fear! Look at what could have been missed? If you take anything away from this episode, let it be this – remember Nicole's story and remember what the outcome can be when you have the courage to say yes. It can change everything.

Be sure to follow Nicole on social media. She's [@nicolewalters](#) everywhere and be sure to check out “[She's the Boss](#)” on USA Network.

Much love to Chicago Recording Company, who I've been partnering with from the start of this podcast and they've been such a huge help putting my recordings from home together and making the sound on point.

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Until next time, have the courage to speak your truth and show up as yourself. Create good trouble.