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**0:00:01.0 Nicole Antoinette:** I'm Nicole Antoinette, and this is Real Talk Radio, a podcast filled with honest conversations about everything. So somehow it's December, that happened, and honestly, all I can think as we get closer to the end of this year is, "Baby, we made it." Sometimes... I don't know, especially in a year with as much uncertainty and challenge as this one has definitely had, simply making it through is more than enough. I seem to always need reminders of this and forget that that's true, but it's true, making it through is more than enough, and we did that, we're here, we made it through. So to honor that, I'm gonna host an end of year reflection and celebration circle. It's happening on Sunday, December 20th. It's on Zoom. Our whole lives are on Zoom now, right? It's part thoughtfully guided journaling session, part fun conversation in the group chat, and part workshop style breakdown of the personal and business strategies and coping mechanisms that I've been using to keep myself marginally sane and grounded. A lot of things aren't working, but there definitely are some things that have been working, and I'm excited to break that down and share it with you in the hopes that it'll give you some useful and doable ideas for yourself.

**0:01:18.1 NA:** So it's a three and a half hour gathering with a break in the middle, and you can join live or watch the replay, the price is \$44 and there is sliding scale pricing as well of \$33 and \$22, along with a handful of completely free scholarship spots that you can apply for, and 5% of ticket sales goes directly to the Okra Project. You can check out more details, at [nicoleantoinette.com/workshop](http://nicoleantoinette.com/workshop), and if there are still spots available... Spots are limited, so depending upon when you're listening to this, if there's still spots available, you are totally invited to join us. It's gonna be a super casual and fun event. Come as you are, messy hair, there's a good chance I'll be wearing my fluffy robe. Pants? I don't know what pants are, it's 2020 and I'm not wearing pants anymore. So hopefully this afternoon together... Well, maybe morning, evening, depending upon what timezone you're in, will leave us all feeling supported and uplifted and really with a new understanding of what this year has meant and where we might like to go next. So that's [nicoleantoinette.com/workshop](http://nicoleantoinette.com/workshop), and in the meantime, let's get right into today's episode.

[music]

**0:02:29.8 NA:** Alright, friends, here we go. I am joined today by Nia Patterson, who's here to talk about how she started her own business while working full-time, a situation that I know lots of folks can already relate to or are hopeful that they can relate to in the new year. I'm so glad you're here Nia, welcome.

**0:02:48.0 Nia Patterson:** Thank you for having me.

**0:02:50.3 NA:** So first, I have to say that I am your new biggest fan of your shop Self Love Tool Chest. I ordered a bunch of pins to give as gifts, and when they arrived, I was actually very sad that I did not get one for myself, so I'll be remedying that soon. They're beautiful, your work's gorgeous.

**0:03:09.9 NP:** Thank you, thank you so much.

**0:03:12.5 NA:** I think the one that I'm gonna buy for myself is the pin that's the multi-colored box of donuts that says I heart snacks.

**0:03:19.5 NP:** Yes, that was actually a collaboration with my Instagram audience pin. I was like, I wanna make a pin, what are you guys into? And I was like, Would you guys prefer donuts or chips or a loaf of bread? And then I was like, What would you want it to say? And then I just designed it based on the votes.

**0:03:41.5 NA:** Well, they voted well, because I will definitely be buying one for myself because I do in fact, heart snacks, so yes. I love it.

**0:03:46.2 NP:** They really did, they really did.

**0:03:48.9 NA:** So to get us started, I thought maybe you could introduce yourself a little bit, who you are, what you do, what you love, basically, what are a few things that we should know about Nia?

**0:03:58.5 NP:** Gosh. That's always the hardest question I think.

**0:04:01.4 NA:** I know, I hate asking it and like asking it at the same time because sometimes people really do like to put in their own words how they like to introduce themselves, and yet when people ask me that sometimes I feel very deer in headlights.

**0:04:13.5 NP:** Totally. I'm like, What is my elevator pitch? I don't even know it.

**0:04:17.2 NA:** Also, you can feel free to pass and I can ask you more specific questions.

**0:04:21.4 NP:** I'll give you a quick rundown. So I'm Nia and I am 28. I live in Nebraska currently, and I started my business in 2016. I talk a lot about mental health and eating disorder recovery and all of that, and honestly, I started my business in a fit of mania because I have bipolar depression, and honestly, I went from like, "I'm gonna cut myself some stickers for my planner," to "I'm starting a business in a three-week period," and that's just kind of how it started, and I've been running it ever since. And ups, downs, all arounds, I guess. I also talk about mental health on my other account, The Friend I Never Wanted, and I talk about my recovery from my eating disorder and... Yeah, so I'm just all over social media, I guess.

**0:05:25.2 NA:** You are indeed. Yes, a very colorful, honest, fun presence on social media.

**0:05:29.6 NP:** Colorful. Yes, that is the goal.

**0:05:33.0 NA:** So I either heard you say, or I read somewhere that calling yourself an artist felt like a big step for you. Will you tell me more about that?

**0:05:41.0 NP:** Oh gosh, yes. So I've always been someone who likes creating things with my

hands. I remember in elementary school, in our after school program, once every six months, I would just build some sort of doll house out of cardboard, and do this whole house thing, so I liked creating things with my hands, but it didn't feel like art. It was just something that I did. And I would paint... I think all kids, of course paint and your parents tell you, "Oh, this is so beautiful," and they put it on the refrigerator, but was it actually good? And so I never was like, "I'm an artist." I wasn't the kid who doodled on my notebook or anything like that, so I never was like, "I'm an artist, and this is who I am, and I'm really good at art," I just knew that sometimes I thought with my right brain. It wasn't until I started drawing my own stickers and then enamel pins that I sort of claimed being an artist and started doing art prints. And even now, sometimes I think of myself more as a creative than an artist to an extent, but I guess I'm getting more along that line, especially since I've been doing resin art and stuff and creating in other mediums. But yeah, I think that's just a hard word to own because it feels so much like you have to do art a certain way, and it has to hold up to certain standards, and you have to be professionally trained, none of these things are true, but that's what my brain tells me, I guess.

**0:07:26.3 NA:** Yeah, there's so much story around, I don't know, stepping into a certain identity. I think about that as a writer, I struggle a lot with that label or that identity or that title, because I haven't written a book and I have this thing in my mind that Real Writers, if we're gonna use capital letters there, that they have a book deal, they've written a book, so there's something in the publishing process and like, "Well, I've been writing almost weekly, like personal essays for like a decade, so I don't know what else I'm looking for," but it's just... It really is wild how... I guess impostor syndrome is what it is, how that just continues to show its face in many different ways, even as you get further and further along into whatever you're doing.

**0:08:10.4 NP:** Yes, I write on Instagram all the time, I have for years, but does that make me a writer? 'Cause everyone will say like, "Oh, you're such a beautiful writer," but I don't feel it because I'm just like, "Well, it's just... I don't know, 2200 characters on Instagram."

**0:08:29.0 NA:** Yeah, it's like, who sets the rules of what qualifies someone as a writer, and then sometimes I have to check myself on, Does it even matter? If I am or I'm not this thing in a lofty titled way, I'm still making the things that I wanna make. My whole vision in my business and as a creator is to make things that feel good to make and that hopefully for other people feel good to join and be a part of. And maybe I don't have to make it any more complicated than that, but my brain really likes to invite me into making it a lot more complicated than that.

**0:08:58.4 NP:** Yes, yes.

**0:09:01.9 NA:** So when it comes to creative self-employment, what's something that you wish people were more open and honest about? What are you always craving, hearing about or having conversations about?

**0:09:12.7 NP:** Do you mean if you're hired as a creative or just doing your own business that's creative?

**0:09:18.7 NA:** I mean... So for you, having started this business, like you said, from 2016 to now, has gone through multiple iterations and evolutions, and obviously we're gonna get into all of that, but when it comes to starting a business or working for yourself in the capacity that you are, and that obviously a lot of other folks are as well, what's something that you just wish people talked about more, is it the financial side of it? Is it impostor syndrome, we were just talking about? I'm just curious, something that you find yourself craving more conversation and honesty about.

**0:09:48.8 NP:** Oh, gosh, I would say being real about the struggles that are going on. I think that's gotten a lot better recently, but I know when I started my business, it was very much the to do of just pretending everything was great, pretending you were making tons of money, and honestly, I've found the Indie Roller community this year, which is actually in the UK, but I'm inserting myself in that, and they're for independent businesses, but they're called Indie Biz and they're creative businesses that are usually run by one person in some sort of structure, whether that's just like your dining room table and you're making your crafts there, or you have an office or you have a warehouse. But it's usually one person who's just running it themselves, and it's crafty, it's colorful and so I've met all these people who have Indie Bizs and I've gotten a chance to talk about those struggles and talk about the ways that we have a hard time, or the financial piece, or the social media piece, or the fact a lot of small businesses just are on social media, but the idea of going live terrifies so many people. Just little things like that. I've been able to find those other people who are going through those same things and that's been really nice this year.

**0:11:34.0 NA:** Yeah, what you spoke about at the beginning of that almost like pressure, whether it's self-created or otherwise, to pretend like everything's going well, there's something in that that I think is very relatable and whether... I mean, it's business or life in general, being willing to... I'm always interested in the almost mundane struggles, more honesty around that, I feel like people tend to share at the extremes, things going really well, or potentially things going really badly, and not that those stories don't deserve to be shared, but I'm always interested in the day-to-day stuff. Like you said, someone who's on social media for their business and they're terrified to do an Instagram Live, that's kind of a boring... It's not like a sexy dramatic problem, but that could be something that someone's struggling with. Or the up and down flows of income month-to-month, or just the every day stuff, I'm always grateful when people talk about.

**0:12:30.5 NP:** Oh gosh, yes. I think it's really refreshing to hear those things from other people instead of just thinking that you are all on your own having these struggles and not doing very well. I think that, especially something that comes up for me is just comparison, all the time. Looking at people's Instagram feeds, looking at... Like if someone posts, "Oh, I sold out of this product," and then just feeling like, "Well, why didn't I sell out of my products and how could I be doing better?" And just falling down that rabbit hole of comparing myself constantly with people is just so defeating, and I think that's one of my major struggles that I'm still currently working on.

**0:13:18.0 NA:** Have you found anything that helps even a little bit for you?

**0:13:23.9 NP:** I mean maybe scrolling Instagram less. Maybe, I think that's where a lot of my comparison comes in, and I know I've talked about this briefly on my business account, but I started

my business as a planner sticker business, I was very into doing planner stickers, and it got to the point where looking at other people's planners, looking at the hundreds of dollars they were spending on stickers and their perfect planner spreads just made me feel like my life was just not together at all, and so I had to stop looking at those things. I had to stop following those people, I had to curate my business Instagram feed just as much as I curated my recovery Instagram feed.

**0:14:11.8 NA:** Yeah, will you talk about that a little more about what it means for you to curate your own feed?

**0:14:16.5 NP:** Sure. I just try to get rid of things that make me feel less than, whether that's on my recovery account... I was very intentional with my recovery account, 'cause I started it with the intention of recovery. So I wasn't following thinspo accounts, fitspo accounts, I wasn't following super thin women all the time. I was following women in larger bodies, I was following men in larger bodies, I was following trans people, I was following all of these different people that made me challenge myself. Like if I come across someone's photo or someone's account and my gut reaction is to be like, "Oh, that's gross," or "Oh, that's disgusting," or "Oh, they need to be doing better," I have to stop and be like, "Maybe this is someone you need to follow because they're challenging you to think outside of what your norm is," and so following those people. And I think it's a little bit different, my business account, in that I already was following 1000 accounts, and so it was mass unfollowing people posting pretty planner spreads and people whose lives just seemed perfectly together. Even if they aren't, I just can't do the highlight reel because it plays tricks on my brain, so unfollowing those people, following people who are being more authentic, more real, more vulnerable has been really helpful for me.

**0:15:50.9 NA:** Yeah, I appreciate the distinction between... It's not shying away from things that challenge us in good supportive ways versus something that just makes you feel bad, those aren't the same thing. And I have to remind myself of that sometimes, that being challenged can be uncomfortable, but it's not the same as that doom scrolling comparison trap that you're talking about that I can relate to, that I think every single person who uses the internet can relate to at least at some point or another. I really... And this too for me is an ongoing thing. I haven't reached any sort of finish line with this, I'm basically just collecting tools in a toolbox of things, of reminders for myself that I know work and one of the things that I always come back to is, reminding myself that every feeling that I had isn't necessarily a failure of mine that needs to be fixed. 'Cause I think at the beginning it was, "I'm feeling really comparison-y of this person, that means I have to do such and such type of self-work" and it could mean that, but also I can just unfollow them instead, not everything has to be a way for me to tell myself that I have more work to do.

**0:17:02.7 NP:** Exactly, exactly. You do not have to have an Instagram feed that makes you feel worse about yourself.

**0:17:10.6 NA:** Yeah, that can be our pull quote from today. [chuckle] So going back in time, 2016, it sounds, just from the brief amount that you shared, that starting this business wasn't a long planned thing, is that true?

**0:17:23.4 NP:** No, it was not actually at all. I think prior to starting my business one day, I was just driving in Ventura, I lived in California at the time, and I was like, "Maybe it'd be cool to start a business sometimes, but I could never do that 'cause I don't have the money to do it." And so I think that was always my opinion of starting a business. I think when I did start my business, I was like, "Well I'm starting an Etsy shop," which felt a little less like starting a, quote unquote, business.

**0:17:57.5 NA:** Yeah, it's like looking at the reasons why something feels inaccessible or unapproachable and finding almost like another entry point. If starting a capital B Business feels like something we can't wrap our heads around, what is maybe a lower hanging fruit or a different way of looking at it, that potentially feels easier. Yeah, yeah. What was your day job at the time?

**0:18:18.5 NP:** I was actually not in a job. I had been fired from a job in, I think, April of that year. I started my business in June. I was fired from this job that I hated anyways, I think... Honestly, it was lucky I got fired because I needed to get out of there. But I didn't have a job at the time, I was just kind of on unemployment looking for a job, and I think I decided that I was going to just make some stickers from my planner, and like I said, it went from zero to 60 overnight, and I actually ended up getting a job, like a full-time job working as a recruitment coordinator, so I coordinated the recruiters for a head hunting software company, and I started that job on the same day that I opened my Etsy shop. So those two both started on June 20th, 2016.

**0:19:22.9 NA:** That's wild that it was the same day.

**0:19:24.8 NP:** I know, right? I remember clicking open on my Etsy shop and then going to my first day at my job.

**0:19:32.1 NA:** Okay, so I'm interested to dig into this a little bit, when you... Since it was the same day, I guess my question is, what was your vision of what success would be in either starting the Etsy shop or thinking of it as starting a business? Was there a part of you that thought, This is gonna become successful enough, in quotes, whatever that means to mean that I don't need a day job or... Yeah, talk to me about that.

**0:19:55.6 NP:** No. I had no idea of what success would look like. I did not think about that. I did not plan for success, [chuckle] I just was like, "I'm going to open an Etsy shop and sell some stuff," and I wasn't even prepared for like, "What if no one buys anything?" At the time... My best friend at the time was a life coach, and she was a Creative Business life coach, so she worked with people who were creative entrepreneurs, so they brought some creativity to their business, and so I remember... I was like, "Oh, I can make stickers." And I went over to our house like I always did, and I sat on her couch and I was like, "Okay, I need you to put on your coach hat." And she was like, "Okay." And I was like, "I wanna start an Etsy shop." And she was like, "Oh, okay." And so we sat down and talked about business, bank accounts, and I don't even know everything we talked about, but we talked about what it would take for me to start this business, and then I think I just went home and took off with it. I was not thinking like, "If I make \$100 in the first week, this will be successful." I wasn't thinking like, "If I can reach 10,000 sales on Etsy, this will be successful." I was just kind of like, "If someone buys the sticker sheet, cool."

[chuckle]

**0:21:33.3 NA:** That's so relatable to me. It's funny, I'm quite organized, planning-focused in a lot of areas of my life, that brings me a lot of joy, but when it comes to making stuff or for me, even the very haphazard organics spirally nature of how I started my own business and the iterations that it has taken over time that I hear a lot of parallels of that. It's not like I had some grand vision or a plan. Even when I started the podcast, I was very clear with myself that it was an experiment. "Let me make eight episodes, if I don't like this, I'm not gonna keep doing it, if no one's listening to it, I guess I'm probably not gonna keep doing it," but I had no plan at all for what it was gonna turn into. And at the beginning, I think I felt a little bit embarrassed about that, that I thought, "I'm supposed to have a business plan," whatever that is...

**0:22:23.5 NP:** I don't know what that looks like. Sorry. [chuckle]

**0:22:25.5 NA:** Right? Same. And potentially, this is more of a thing in other industries or other business types, if you are trying to get funding, if you're setting up some kind of a brick and mortar thing, none of that applied to me.

**0:22:36.1 NP:** If you need a loan.

**0:22:37.4 NA:** Exactly. And all of that. And so for me, I did still feel a little embarrassed of, "Shouldn't I have it together more? Shouldn't I have some kind of plan?" But what I've come to realize is, as much as I can research something or as much as I can think about something, the only way that I know if I like doing something is to try it.

**0:22:53.4 NP:** That's fair.

**0:22:55.2 NA:** And so just getting started, you could have had a whole plan, but what if you didn't like having an Etsy shop. [chuckle] It's like... You don't know.

**0:23:01.9 NP:** I think... 'Cause I did talk about this on a podcast that I did, I'm very much the person who sees someone doing something and I'm like, "That doesn't look that hard, I can do that," and I think that's how I've approached a lot of things in business and just what I'm doing for example, with stickers, I was like, "People are making these stickers, I'm spending \$4 a sheet on these stickers, I can get a sticker machine and cut some stickers, I can do that," and I think the same with my podcast being like, "Everyone else is doing a podcast, why can't I do a podcast and I can buy a microphone," that sort of thing. And just... I'm very much like, "If they can do it, I can do it and I'm gonna try and do it, and if I hate it, I hate it, and I'll stop."

**0:23:50.9 NA:** Which is so interesting on the heels of what you said about the comparison and imposter syndrome, 'cause it's almost like the other side of that same coin, like "Why not me? If they could do it, I can do it." And it's funny how we can experience both of those back and forth and within our one person.

**0:24:04.9 NP:** Yes, and I think almost like I get trapped in the comparison when it's something that I can't do. For example, when I see people in thinner bodies, and I know that because of my history with an eating disorder, I can't just go out there and go to the gym and start restricting food because that's not something that I can do with my history, and so it's something that is inaccessible to me, so I feel kind of trapped with that and then I get down about it, and so I feel like I will try and do stuff, but if I literally can't, then that comparison just drags me down.

**0:24:46.0 NA:** Yeah, that makes sense. The difference between what you can and can't control and the fact that the emotional reaction is different to each of those. So it sounds like there wasn't a big financial investment potentially, like you said, "Get a sticker machine, get started," but that's not no money. So I'm interested where the money to start the business came from?

**0:25:07.1 NP:** Oh gosh. So, I honestly wanna say it probably came from my unemployment checks, but I think the most expensive item to start my business was the sticker cutting machine, and I started my business in June, and the previous Christmas, I was going home to Nebraska for Christmas, and I told my family, all I really want for Christmas is this fancy \$250 sticker cutting machine, that's all I want. I wasn't planning to start a business, I just wanted to cut my own stickers. And so I told them that's what I wanted, and of course, my family, being the great communicators that they are, they bought me two of them because two people both bought me one, and so they pulled both these things out at Christmas and were like, "So we bought you two, so you can return one and then buy whatever else you wanna buy," and so I ended up checking this gigantic box of the sticker machine on the flight back home from Nebraska, and that sticker cutting machine sat in its box from December until June until I decided that maybe I could take it out and give it a shot.

**0:26:31.0 NA:** That's fun, that's fun.

**0:26:33.1 NP:** So that was the... I guess the upfront, putting in... I didn't pay for it, I got it for Christmas. I think what I spent money on was the sticker paper, and I think I was buying 25 sheets at a time. Of course, now, if I put in a sticker... I don't do stickers anymore, but if I were to put in a sticker sheet order, it'd be for a 1000 sheets of sticker paper, but I was buying 25 sheets and I already had a little inkjet printer, so I was paying for ink for that, so I just kind of was working with what I had.

**0:27:08.6 NA:** Yeah, that idea of starting where you are. And it's a question that I love asking myself is, "What if this were easy?" and I really have a tendency to over-complicate things or overreach, and I just have to kind of simplify. Simplify like, "Okay, what do you already have? What do you already have access to? What kind of support is already in your network?" these types of things, and I hear that a lot in what you're saying too, that it's like, "Well, I already have these things. Let me start here." Do you remember your first sale?

[chuckle]

**0:27:43.4 NP:** I think my first three sales, I was like, "These don't count," because they were from

my friends. But my first sale was actually from my business coach friend, and she bought... I was making stickers, but I was also doing planner cases at the time, 'cause I was very into sewing and stuff, and so I made her a custom planner case and she was my first sale and in hindsight, I probably under-charged for what I was doing of course, but yeah, she was my first sale. And I remember just getting so antsy because the first sales that were coming in were all from my friends, and I was like, "These don't count, these aren't real sales." And everyone was like, "Nia, those still count. You're still making money, it counts," I'm like, "They don't count." And so I was just sitting there waiting for real sales to come in. I don't remember exactly what my first real sales were, but I know they would have been sticker sheets and I think I remember my first custom order for sticker sheets, but yeah, I just... I think at that point I was still... I still had my phone on so that if I did get an Etsy order, it would do the little "cha-ching" sound that Etsy plays, so I loved that sound for sure.

**0:29:06.4 NA:** Tell me the story of, I don't know, maybe it was a particular sale or a particular month or something happening that made you think, "Oh my God, this could actually turn into something." Do you remember either a turning point or an early confidence boost like that?

**0:29:22.9 NP:** I will tell you, I am the queen of the pessimists, of the cynical pessimists. I have a crown, that is where I live, and so my friends will tell you it pisses them off all the time that I'm like, "It's not really that good," or "It could be better," or "Yeah, I mean, that happened, but I could have done better," and so my friends are constantly like, "Nia, this amazing thing happened, pay attention to that." I think... I'm trying to think what would have been something that I created that went well. I was definitely a part of the Black Women Who Plan and Create group, and so I remember creating my Love Yourself collection, sticker collection, and it had like a Black girl magic melanin sticker set, and then it had a natural hair sticker set, and then it had a curvy girl, which is actually probably the first body positive thing that I made, sticker set. And the melanin set sold really well, people kept coming and buying that, which I was very surprised about because I wasn't super tapped into the Black community, and so I remember trying to find ways to tap into the Black community so that I could sell that, and that was when I found more communities of business support and joining in the Black Women Who Plan and Create group, and then also into the spin-off Shop Owners group and just meeting people there.

**0:31:12.9 NP:** I think I had a lot of cool moments though like the first time that we did the BWWPC mega sale for Black Friday, and that went amazing. And the first time that I did the planner box collective sale, and I think I made over \$1000 in a weekend, and that was just wild. So I've had little moments like that. I think the first time I vended at the Black Women Who Plan and Create conference. So little moments like that, but I've never been like... I've never thought to myself, "This is where I made it. This is that moment where things took off," because I guess I just never see things that way, I always see things as, "I could do better," and which is totally a character flaw, to be honest, but we're working on it.

[chuckle]

**0:32:07.5 NA:** But honestly, the reason that I asked is because I think that it's really easy to turn our story into a pretty narrative, in retrospect. It would be easy now, four years into this business for

you to carefully craft, "Okay, well, this was this turning point, and then I did this, and this is what I did right," because you can see more of the whole picture together and yet... And I could do the same thing for sure, "Oh, well, this led to this," but I only knew that it led to that because I'm looking back on it now, at the time, it all felt very haphazard, like you, I felt like, "Is this enough? Is this good enough? Am I doing the right thing? Am I just fucking all over the place?" and sometimes the answer was, "Yes."

**0:32:44.8 NP:** Like it was just a random choice on a Monday.

**0:32:47.0 NA:** Exactly, but I think that hearing you say that gives me comfort, and I would imagine the same would be true for other people because it's reassurance that if you feel like, "Oh my gosh, I'm all over the place, I don't have this perfect plan, I don't have a moment where I feel like, Did I make it?" It's like, "Well, was this a fluke? Is it gonna happen again?" All of those doubts are so normal.

**0:33:05.0 NP:** Oh, so much.

**0:33:07.5 NA:** I appreciate hearing you speak about that because it's like, "Okay, cool. So if I have doubts and I'm not really sure where it's gonna go, that's fine too, it means I can just keep making stuff"

**0:33:20.3 NP:** I will say... So because I struggle with mental illness, my business has never had a full good year, to say that. I've never, until recently, had a full year where I worked the whole year, the business was open a full year. I started it in June 2016, but in February 2017, I went to treatment for my eating disorder, so I had to close the business down. And then in 2018, I moved to Nebraska, so I had to shut things down because I didn't have a place to live before I moved there. So it wasn't like... Every time I had momentum, every time I would do the planner box collective sale, I'd have to shut down. Every time I would do some fancy swag and I would get sales, I'd have to shut down for whatever reason. And so I didn't really have that just straight trajectory of doing well, and so I think, honestly, if I thought of something where I was like, "This was a really good moment for my business" it probably didn't happen until last fall, a little bit before this time last year, which is like three years into the business when I ran my Fat Yoga Babes Kickstarter and I fully funded my kickstarter in 12 hours, and then I funded all of the tiers within the 28-day period that I ran my kickstarter. And I think that was a moment of just like, "Okay, I just did that." And actually giving myself credit for that.

**0:35:04.2 NA:** Yeah, I appreciate you saying that too, because it's such a both and... You can have a lot of self-doubts and also we can have these real accomplishments that, like you said, I think a lot of us need to give ourselves more credit for things, and so should be able to do that.

**0:35:18.3 NP:** I am filled with self-doubt [chuckle]

**0:35:20.8 NA:** Same. Absolutely hard, hard, same. And also, as someone with depression and anxiety, what you said about essentially creating with limitations is also really real, and I've had

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interesting conversations with friends who are small business owners, whether it's their full-time job or it's something they're doing on the side of a full-time job, who have really young kids or who are taking care of a sick parent or something, that there's so many different forms of limitations, and yet there's this story on a pedestal that in order to be successful, it has to be this upward, continual trajectory, like you said, of success and of growth, and I have been really inspired by hearing real examples of folks for whom that's not the case, because I think that that's more people's experience than not. Life happens, stuff happens.

**0:36:12.6 NA:** You are unwell, or something comes up financially, or a housing situation changes, or you get divorced and you close the business for a while, or you take a break from a hobby or any of those things, and I just think that there's something really vulnerable back to what you said at the beginning of people admitting what their struggles are, I think the same is true of admitting and talking about and not being ashamed about these ups and downs in business.

**0:36:37.7 NP:** Yes, yes, definitely.

**0:36:40.8 NA:** So we talked a little bit about where the money came from to start the business, I'm interested about where the time and energy, not just came from at the beginning, but continues to come from because you still work a full-time job, right?

**0:36:54.8 NP:** I work like a part-time job now, but... Yeah, I can tell you how I got there. So like I said, the first bit of energy, I guess, came from literally being in a hypomanic state, which I'm assuming you don't have bipolar, so you probably don't know what it feels like, but it literally feels like you have had the best coffee of your life, and you're just like floating and you're just having all these ideas and your brain and your neurons are just firing, and it is just magical, and you have all these ideas and this energy, and so I definitely credit going from zero to 60 in three weeks to that hypomanic state. But since then, it's been up and down. I was not medicated for bipolar at that time, we didn't know I had bipolar disorder, and so my business has been a struggle of being depressed, being hypomanic, being stable, and when I'm depressed, energy just goes out the window, as I'm sure pretty much everyone with depression knows, and so it has been a struggle for years in order to find the energy to run this business. Whether that was just like...

**0:38:32.0 NP:** I don't even know, whether it was just like a given day, and I didn't wanna package orders on a Sunday, or whether I was running behind on Etsy orders, and I was shipping them out after the deadline because I had just been too depressed up until that point to do them, but still getting boosts of energy, and I think it wasn't until this June, this year, when I first got on a medication that finally worked really well for me that I felt like I was capable of putting in the energy into this business, and that's literally four years after I started this business, and I still struggle with that today. Even though I'm medicated, even though I'm on the, quote unquote, the good meds, I still struggle with energy every day to put into this business and to read my emails and respond to customer service messages, all of those just can make my anxiety go so high, and so it's a struggle, but somehow I just know that I have to do it. I just... If I want the business to keep going, it has to happen.

**0:39:54.6 NA:** Yeah, will you talk a little bit about what your motivation is with the business and what drives you, because I think it would be easy for someone listening to what you just so honestly shared and said, "Well, is it worth it?" If it's hard in these different ways, not doing it is of course an equally valid option, so I'm interested in what makes it worth the struggle for you?

**0:40:17.2 NP:** I will say I'm super stubborn, and that's probably part of it, but I like creating and it feels like my little creative child, I think it felt that way from the beginning. I just, I wanna totally credit just my stubbornness though, my inability to just let things go and be like, "I don't wanna do this anymore," and I think also... I talked about this this summer when I re-branded. The re-brand was just a complete refresh for me. I wasn't doing planner stickers anymore, which were just driving me up the wall making me hate the business, I switched it to stuff that made me happy. I switched it to a better color scheme, and I switched it to rainbows, and I switched it to pins and stickers, I don't have to sit here and cut for hours, and I put out my art as art prints, and I created a plushie. I started doing things that made me more excited to want to do the business, but for a while there, it was just like I wasn't putting effort in, I wasn't posting on Instagram, I wasn't putting up new products, so it kind of didn't feel like it was worth it. I just would fill orders every two weeks when they came in, that's just what I would do.

**0:41:58.3 NP:** If they came in, I filled them. If they didn't, they didn't. I would just watch TV and stare at my desk and feel like a failure because I couldn't find the energy to get up and go over to my desk and cut stickers. Honestly, a lot of times I waited for a wave of energy or motivation to hit me, but I was stubborn enough to be like, "I'm not totally giving it up." Even when I just hated what I was doing, I still wasn't... I still didn't think, "Maybe I should just shut it down." So I don't know, I credit a lot of things to my stubbornness, like my recovery, I just am not frequently willing to give up on something that I've started.

**0:42:53.6 NA:** There's so much in what you just shared that we could be on this podcast for the next six hours, I just think there is so much...

**0:43:00.6 NP:** What a great podcast.

**0:43:00.8 NA:** Oh my gosh, you are sharing with a level of self-aware vulnerability that I don't wanna say I wasn't expecting, 'cause obviously I have conversations like this all the time, but it's incredibly touching and refreshing to hear someone be willing to talk about all the different aspects of what it's actually like, not necessarily the elevator pitch, right? Not just the highlight reel, like things that you mentioned before, being willing to be like, "No, this is what it actually looked like, this is what it actually felt like," and still... If I go online right now and look at your shop, it's filled with these beautiful uplifting products, and so it's just like the both end can be true that you can love something and want something and not love it all the time.

**0:43:50.3 NP:** Oh totally.

**0:43:50.4 NA:** And to not wanna do it all the time, and you can have a real passion and commitment to the vision and who it is that you're serving in your work, and that can be real and

deep, and also fuck, let's just lay on the couch and procrastinate on everything, like that... It's just like... It's so real.

**0:44:08.1 NP:** Yes, meet yourself where you're at. I know that on Etsy... 'Cause Etsy will literally be a total hater and be like, "Your shipping window is too long, people aren't gonna wanna buy from you," and still, I set my processing times to, I wanna say five to 14 business days because I knew that some days I'm gonna package orders the same day, but a lot of the times it's gonna take me two weeks to find the motivation, energy to package those orders, and I might take longer, and I've gotten angry customer service messages because of that. So it doesn't always work out perfectly, but meeting myself where I'm at and just accepting that maybe I'll get less sales because my processing time's longer, but I'm not gonna put myself at risk for even more angry reviews because I'm missing all of my processing times.

**0:45:03.2 NA:** Yeah, what you're talking about is essentially creating a business that as much as possible works for the actual you and not some idealized version of you.

**0:45:10.6 NP:** Yes, yes.

**0:45:13.4 NA:** I've been thinking about this recently in the context of my writing, for whatever reason, I care about writing so much, it's the thing probably I care about the most of everything that I do, and therefore I'm the most likely to put it off 'cause I have the most feelings and emotional baggage around it, and in the last few months, I've started having Zoom writing dates with a couple of writing friends where it's like an hour, we pop on, we chat for 10 minutes and then write for the rest of the hour and...

**0:45:38.2 NP:** Oh awesome.

**0:45:39.1 NA:** Literally, Nia, I wouldn't get it done without that. I care about it so much and I have to create these containers in which to do it, and part of me is like, "What's wrong with you that you can't... You're not motivated enough to do this on your own" or whatever, whatever. But it's like, "No, I have to create the business and the structures that actually work for me, not for some, I don't know, sitting at a typewriter in Italy, version of myself that I wish that I was."

**0:46:00.0 NP:** And I feel like, honestly, COVID has made that happen because so many people are being met where they're at and given accommodations that previously it would have been like, "Well, you're just lazy" or "You're just incapable of doing things,"<sup>2</sup> but now with COVID people are like, "Oh, people need accommodations and people need help, and people need to be met where they're at... Okay, that's actually important."

**0:46:27.2 NA:** Yeah, it's super important. So I wanna go back to talking about the time and energy to create things, 'cause it sounds from what you've said that maybe starting the business the day you got your job, where it went from unemployment to having a job, it sounds like you've been unemployed, full-time and part-time working while having this business, which is a bunch of different experiences I'm sure, either way, especially if you're working full-time or part-time, the

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time and energy to make the things and market the things and ship the things that has to come from somewhere, and I would love for you to share potentially a couple of... I don't even know if sacrifices is the right word, but maybe trade-offs that you've intentionally made over the years in order to do this business, because I think that this is something that we know is true, there's a finite amount of time, energy, money, it has to come from somewhere, but we don't like the reality of, "Oh, that means I have to say no to this other thing that I might actually wanna do." Yes. So are there any specific either trade-offs or sacrifices that you feel like you've made for this business?

**0:47:32.9 NP:** I don't totally know, but I know that I could have watched more TV, I could have probably spent more money on things that I wanted to spend money on instead of funneling my personal money into the business, spending more money on a place to live in order to have an office. Settling in that sort of way. Just... I guess struggling with my mental health... There have been so many Sundays or Saturdays, I guess, where I did not wanna come in my office, sit down and cut stickers. Honestly, I think I would be perfectly happy making stickers if I didn't have to cut them myself. Which at first was fine, it was just part of the job, but then I realized when I sat down to cut stickers, my mood just dropped, it made me so miserable. I would put off cutting stickers for days because I knew that I would just hate it. And so trading off having a better mood, a better sense of self, a better happiness to come in my office and cut stickers and ruining my day because cutting stickers or not hanging out with a friend on the weekend because I had to process orders for that whole weekend, that sort of thing. And honestly, I have done the same thing where I will just get on the phone with someone and I'll sit here working and they'll sit there working, and that's great for me because we can still talk.

**0:49:20.8 NP:** It's like you're sitting there in a study party where if you have an idea, you're like, "Oh, hey, this..." But you're still working. So that's nice for me too, But I think mainly a mood trade-off and just making myself do the work when I really didn't want to.

**0:49:42.8 NA:** Yeah, it's again, the both end of, "Sometimes the answer is, I'm actually not gonna do the work and I am just gonna lay on the couch, and sometimes the answer is I don't have to be in the mood to do the thing in order to do the thing, so just get on with it" and both are equally true and both serve me at different times.

**0:49:57.3 NP:** Yes, if I start doing something, usually the motivation will catch up with me, but it's the starting that is the most miserable part.

**0:50:08.7 NA:** Yeah, the myth that it's motivation that leads to action when actually, I think that it's action that leads to motivation.

**0:50:15.5 NP:** Yes, yes.

**0:50:16.7 NA:** Also, it's interesting hearing you talk about, how much you enjoyed making the stickers, but then the absolute dread of cutting them, and when you mentioned, "Oh, I don't make stickers anymore," there's something in that evolution too that I think is useful, that... Like letting go of offerings either that you no longer love or just because people are willing to buy something

doesn't mean that it's worth the trade-offs that you have to make in order to keep creating it. And that's something that I've struggled with over the years of, "Well, I could keep doing X thing, whatever offering or product or whatever, but if it's..." Like you said, if I'm feeling dread every time I think about it, if every time I sit down to work on it, all I wanna do is take a nap, there's something in that that maybe I shouldn't... Just 'cause I can get paid for it doesn't mean that I should.

**0:50:56.4 NP:** And it took me years to get to that point of, "I'm not gonna make stickers anymore." Years. And even when I finally decided I'm not doing stickers anymore, I still was like, "Well, I'll leave this on the website because some people might want it. I'll still cut these stickers and like..." No, I just... I really didn't wanna do it. So now, if I cut stickers, it's solely for me, or it's for a friend, or I cut stickers to put on my little resin products as little thank yous. It's easy stuff that I want to do, it's not, I have to cut 100 sticker sheets today for 30 orders.

**0:51:44.0 NA:** The frankness that you're speaking about, that there's only a couple of options that if there's something in your business that you don't enjoy doing, or I guess something in your life you don't enjoy doing, the options or either don't do it and deal with the consequences, do it anyway, even though you don't want to, or pay someone else to do it. That's just kind of the only options, and I have chosen all of those. There are certain aspects... So right now, as of the last couple of months, I'm finally able to have each episode of the podcast transcribed, which is something that I had been wanting to do for a long time. And obviously, that's not free, and I guess in theory, I could do it myself, that's not a skill set that I have, there's services where you get an AI or a computer-generated transcription that honestly varies quite a bit in how good it is. I'm like, "Well, let me just do that, and then I'll go through and edit it." I think I tried editing it for 15 minutes and that feeling of dread that you're explaining, I was like... I'm like, "Oh my God, there is no... I will quit this podcast if I have to do this right now." So I'm like, "Well, that means that I have to pay for it." So the money has to come from somewhere because I don't wanna quit the podcast and I want it to be accessible in this way, and there's no way I'm doing this myself.

**0:52:53.3 NP:** Yes, yes, I've actually been... For me, I don't write fast enough to keep up with my brain when I think, and so when I need to write something or get a bunch of thoughts out, I'll just voice memo them, and I was having Siri write them for me and Siri... Siri just has issues. She tries, I'm gonna give her credit for that, she tries, but she just can't... She can't do it. And so I've been voice memoing and then putting them into one of those systems, and so luckily it's just like four minutes or something, but having to transcribe one of my podcast episodes, and I've had podcast episodes that are like an hour and a half, like, "No. No, thank you. No."

**0:53:42.8 NA:** No. A hard same. And so again, it's like, "Well..." And there are certain things that I don't love doing in my business, but I do them anyway, and then there are certain things that I don't love doing, so I just stopped doing them, and that reminder to myself that it's really only one of those three options, I just have to pick one and then it's a lot easier for me to live with this option that I picked if I felt like I picked it. If I've made a choice. So you mentioned before that one of the other trade-offs was maybe not spending as much time with friends, can you share a little bit about how you talk to the other people in your life about this extra commitment of having your own business when it means that you have less time and energy to spend with them?

**0:54:21.0 NP:** Oh, gosh, I will say that the last month has not been great, as in I've been prioritizing friends over business stuff, but... I'm pretty open about my business and what I'm doing and what I've got going on, but lately, my friend and I had been binge watching Criminal Minds, and the past couple of weeks, we've been staying up until midnight or 1:00 AM watching it, and that does not work on Tuesday nights because I get up for a call with the UK that's business-related at 4:00 AM, and so having to be like, "We can't watch Criminal Minds until midnight, I really have to go to bed at 9:00 PM on a Tuesday," and that breaks my heart because of course, I would much rather stay up late watching Criminal Minds and hanging out with my friends, but they understand and they would rather that I prioritize work and business stuff than hanging out with them when we can just hang out on a Wednesday night instead. It's not like... Oh gosh, I sound like my therapist, it's not an all or nothing. But I think they're all very open about it and just flexible, and they don't mind if I'm like, "Hey, I gotta go, I have to work," or "I can't talk to you right now, I've gotta do this work thing," or "I can't really meet you for lunch, I have to go through whatever module thing I'm working on right now," they're all very open about it and nice.

**0:56:05.3 NA:** Yeah, that's great to hear, and I feel like people who would be actively unsupportive probably aren't gonna be in your life, for that long. There's that as well, but... For me, one of the things that I had to get more firm on, especially as a full-time self-employed person, is stronger daytime boundaries, just because I technically could meet someone for lunch, pre-COVID, but just because I have more of that flexibility, I was doing that way too much, and then the work wasn't getting done and it was... I felt like I was disrespecting myself and I was disrespecting the work, and so having to be like, "No, I'm sorry, I can't do that," even if technically I could move stuff around, that has been really helpful for me, and I have found... On this topic of talking to other people about it and reflecting on the question that I just asked you, something that has helped me is to be more specific with people about what it is that I'm working on instead of defaulting into that, "Oh my God, I'm so busy." That's something I try really never to say, the busy-ness as a badge of honor, I used to do that a lot and I don't... My beliefs and values around that have very much changed, and so just being willing to be like, "Oh, I'm creating the curriculum for this upcoming workshop and I'm gonna be working on that this evening," and not that I owe anybody details, but sometimes I find bringing them into the process a little bit more helps people be even more supportive.

**0:57:25.9 NP:** Right, 'cause then also, I guess, I take things personally when someone's like, "Oh, I'm just too busy to hang out with you", and I'm like, "Well, what are you doing? What's so much cooler than me?" But... If I know what you're doing, yeah, I'm like, "Oh yeah, that makes sense. I get that's important and that has to happen." And I'll... Of course, I'm gonna respect your boundaries if you're like, "I can't hang out with you" anyways. But it is nice to know like, what's going on in someone's life.

**0:57:55.2 NA:** Yeah. So we've covered a bunch of things. Yeah, is there anything that we haven't talked about so far that you really wanted to bring up?

**0:58:06.0 NP:** Not in particular that I can think of.

**0:58:13.1 NA:** I just wanted to make sure that there wasn't anything that you were like, "Oh, I'm really hoping that we get to this."

**0:58:20.3 NP:** No, I don't think there's anything else, like I need to talk about this. I think you've asked lots of great questions.

**0:58:25.1 NA:** So then I have only a couple of questions left. Let's say someone listening is working full or part-time, is interested in potentially starting up their own thing, has any number of the doubts and obstacles that we've already talked about, what's your pep talk for them?

**0:58:43.0 NP:** As in like, if you wanna move on from what you're doing or just like if you wanna cope with what you're doing better?

**0:58:49.5 NA:** Maybe both or whatever, whatever you feel more interested in speaking to.

**0:58:51.5 NP:** Okay. I guess I've been really lucky in that the jobs that I've had have been rather low key to the point where if I jump on Etsy or if I jump on Shopify during the work day, it's not the end of the world, but I think setting those time boundaries is really important. If I'm gonna work Monday through Friday, and I wanna have a weekend doing stuff Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and the evenings could work, or if I'd rather have my evenings, setting time on Saturday, Sunday to work, I think it's important that you're still taking time for yourself, which preaching to myself here. But I honestly, since I stopped working full-time, which was the middle of September, I have my days drafted out on my white board next to me, and I've specifically written for my part-time job and for my business, like Saturday and Sunday are off days, I don't work on those days, and whether or not I stick to that is a whole different thing. This past Saturday, I think I sat down and just worked, but it was a choice of, "I don't really have anything else going on today, I don't really wanna sit down and watch Netflix. So I guess I could get ahead on some work. It's not like you can't do things if that's what you wanna do, but having those boundaries there, I think is really important.

**1:00:31.7 NA:** I could not agree more in the power of time-blocking and also that you can break your own rules.

**1:00:37.0 NP:** Yes.

**1:00:38.0 NA:** For me, the one thing that has been the absolute, most challenging recurring obstacle of being self-employed, and I know friends that are more traditionally employed that this is the same, but the polluted time where I'm sort of working, but not really working. "I'm just gonna check this email quick." So I'm not really off and enjoying the leisure time and I'm not really working, so I'm not actually getting anything done that feels good there, it's just all this sort of mess of time and, yeah, time-blocking out really specific, and like you said, it's... The time has to come from somewhere, it's either gonna be the mornings before work, the evenings after work, or on whatever your weekend is, choose, and if the amount of time allotted... Let's say it's only a couple of hours a week, okay, then be realistic about what can happen in only a couple hours a week.

**1:01:22.7 NP:** Right, exactly. Make sure you're prioritizing what needs to actually get done.

**1:01:28.4 NA:** Yeah, and for me that I have done some version of self-employment for a really long time sometimes while also doing other part-time things, sometimes while doing it full-time, and based on what else is going on my life, obviously my capacity differs whether that's mental health or other obligations and so, the kindest that I can be to myself about the difference in, again, what my idealized self could do if I was this robot person versus what my actual capacity is and being really, really honest and kind to myself about that whenever possible.

**1:01:58.3 NP:** Definitely, I think one thing that has also helped me is when I first moved to Nebraska, I moved into this apartment that was a one-bedroom, open floor plan, that's what they're called, I think, where it had this tiny little study area, I don't know who's desk would have fit in that area, but it had a study area and then the living room, the dining room and the kitchen, it was all one room, it was just one long room, and so I have this massive desk, it just fit in the study area/part of the living room, and so my desk just took up a whole fourth of that space, and so my TV and my couch were right next to my desk. So all I could see what from the couch was like my desk on one side, the TV in front of me, and then the rest of the room. And every time I would sit down to take a break, watch TV, be depressed, be anxious, I would see my desk and I would be like, "I should go over there and work."

**1:03:08.2 NP:** So even if I was taking time away from working or it was the weekend, my desk was still sitting there staring at me. And so when I finally moved last year, after being in a year-long lease at that other place, I specifically got a two-bedroom apartment, which I know isn't feasible for everyone, depending on where you're living, but I specifically put my desk and everything in my second bedroom, I have an office and I close that door every night. I close that door, if I'm not in there, I go sit in the living room to watch TV. I'm not staring at my desk, I'm not staring at my computer screen. Having that separation has been magical. Of course, since then I've expanded and it's come into my living room a little bit, but still having my work space contained in a room has made it so much better for my mental health.

**1:04:11.2 NA:** Yeah, yes, yes, yes. I was sort of laughing to myself when you were sharing that, that years ago, I lived in a really small place and I would put... I don't think I've ever said this out loud, I would put an extra bed sheet over the work area at the end... Like the space was still there, but I was like, it's covered in the bed sheet, it has gone... The work has gone to sleep.

**1:04:30.5 NP:** I can't see it, it's not there.

[laughter]

**1:04:34.1 NA:** Oh, my friend Alex shared with me once, someone she knows that at the end of the work day, will close the laptop and tie a ribbon, like tie a ribbon in a bow around it to be like...

**1:04:40.8 NP:** Oh my god, that's amazing.

**1:04:41.1 NA:** Hence, this is done till tomorrow. I'm like, "Yeah, but then I need it to watch Netflix, so I don't know."

**1:04:45.5 NP:** Exactly, exactly.

**1:04:45.5 NA:** Oh my gosh. If you...

**1:04:46.2 NP:** That's amazing.

**1:04:47.3 NA:** I know, right? If you could leave folks with one call to action based on our conversation, what would it be, maybe a question to ask themselves or a small action to take?

**1:04:55.3 NP:** Gosh. Oh man, on the spot. Maybe ask yourself if your business is like filling your cup or just constantly draining it?

**1:05:16.3 NA:** Yeah, yeah.

**1:05:18.4 NP:** And it can drain it somewhat like... Like I said, I cut stickers for years, it's not gonna be all super amazing, like you're still gonna have to respond to customer service, but are you creating things that you want to create? Like, are you actually doing things that you want to do? 'Cause there's no point in going to a nine-to-five that you hate, getting off and then doing more stuff that you hate, right?

**1:05:46.7 NA:** [laughter] Yeah.

**1:05:46.8 NP:** Why would you do that? Then I would be like, close it down.

**1:05:48.8 NA:** Right. Yeah, for why? Yes, for why? Yeah, that is a great point of reflection. Yeah, yes, yes, yes. So I'm gonna put a link to your shop, of course, in the show notes, but what's the very best place for people to find you and say Hi online if they are new to your corner of the Internet?

**1:06:04.6 NP:** Oh, you can find me on Instagram @selflovetoolchest, or you can find me on Instagram @thefriendineverwanted. Or you can just email me at nia@selflovetoolchest.com.

**1:06:17.9 NA:** Yes, yes, yes, yes. I hope everyone goes and orders, particularly some enamel pins for themselves because they are... Like they're just... When I opened the box, I just couldn't. They were so beautiful and so just like fun, they made me smile. So, thank you for your work...

**1:06:29.0 NP:** And we've got like the Christmas enamel pins right now too, which I just, I'm really kind of obsessed with. But yeah, I wanted to bring back more body positivity. So.

**1:06:38.4 NA:** Yes... Okay, I have to go check out the new holiday stuff. Thank you, Nia, so much for this.

**1:06:42.4 NP:** Yes, thank you for having me.

[music]

**1:06:43.2 NA:** And that's our show for today. Our music is by Adam Day, who also handles our sound editing. Thanks, Adam, you're the best. And huge thanks as well, to every single member of our Patreon community for making this honest conversation, this entire podcast, and so much of my other work, like my twice weekly personal essay newsletter, called Good Question Possible. Your monthly funding allows me to keep creating resources and gatherings for folks who crave honest conversations, both with themselves and others. And I fully believe that these conversations can change our lives, our relationships and our world. To join us, just come on over to [patreon.com/nicoleantoinette](https://patreon.com/nicoleantoinette). Our community operates on a shame-free sliding scale, so you can feel good about supporting this work from within your own means. So I'll see you over in the Patreon community, yeah? And until next time, I want you to know three things. First that you are enough. Second, that you are not alone. And third, that I'm totally rooting for you.

[music]

How Nia Patterson started a business while working full-time

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