

00:00:01 Welcome back to the hair of the dog podcast. I'm Nicole Begley. And today we are talking about the journey, your life's purpose, going to be a great episode. So stay tuned. Welcome to the hair of the dog podcast. If you're a pet photographer, ready to make more money and start living a life by your design, you've come to the right place.

00:00:22 And now your host, pet photographer, travel addict, chocolate martini connoisseur, Nicole Begley. Hey everybody. Welcome back. It's Nicole from Hair of the Dog and man, it has been a big week here at Hair of the Dog HQ, the biggest piece of the week. If you saw my most recent announcement on the hair of the dog, Facebook page was that drum roll,

00:00:48 please. I don't know if you can hear that on my desk and I can't make the drum roll sound with my mouth. So that's going to have to spice, but big news, the hair of the dog conservation fund is an official nonprofit. We are an actual 5 0 1 C3 we've been approved by the IRS man. This journey has taken some time I put in the paperwork in may boast to take 90 days actually took about 120,

00:01:22 which I guess in the grand scheme of things, it's actually not that bad for how behind the IRS has been for so many things. So I am very thankful that it is finally done. It is created. It is official, and we are celebrating here because as a pet photographer community, we can actually make a huge difference in our natural world with protecting wild places and the wild animals that lived in them.

00:01:50 And if you're part of this community, you're actually 100% helping this mission as well. So thank you for being part of it. Ah, man, it's just absolutely incredible and so incredibly humbling. But what I want to talk about today is really the journey, not just to this, but the journey to kind of our life's purpose. I know, I know that is a big,

00:02:19 big albatross in the room, elephant in the room. I don't know a big, it's a big thing, right? It seems very final. It seems very like don't mess up. You better not choose the wrong thing. It's your life's purpose after all, it can never be changed. But what if your life's purpose is always evolving? What if by following our interests,

00:02:47 we're actually working our way down our life's purpose. What if it's okay if you don't know what your life's purpose is? Yeah. All of those things are okay and nobody's journey the same. And I actually thought I knew my life's purpose before, but now maybe it's not like the end goal here, but I feel like this new life purpose is a new step.

00:03:09 It's a new step on the never ending journey to continuing to have self discovery and continuing to figure out why we're here on this great big rock spinning through space at 17,000 miles an hour. It's just a constant journey. So I want to talk a little bit about that journey today. And I want to encourage you to continue moving on your journey because like I said,

00:03:34 no, two journeys look the same. And the only way to really move forward in these journeys is to follow your interests and follow your heart and follow those kind of moments of passion where you're like, huh, I think there's something to this. Have you ever had that experience where you all of a sudden just like get this idea and when you get this idea,

00:04:02 it feels just like a hundred percent true. Immediately, as soon as it's into your head. You're like, yes, yes. There is no question. There is no there's, there's nothing. And there's no doubt. You're really just all of a sudden all in so excited. And you're, you're just, you can't believe that this actually happened. I have no I've experienced this a couple of times in my life.

00:04:31 One of the big ones was when creating hair of the dog and coming up with the business pet photography and some of these other courses and, and just creating this, this whole community that I've created over the past, gosh, six, seven years. And I remember it vividly, I was in my office. This was back in Pittsburgh. And all of a sudden it was just like a direct download to my brain from some other far corner of the universe.

00:05:00 Some back corner with cobwebs of my subconscious, somewhere in my higher self, whatever, wherever it came from, it was there. And it was just like, whoa, it just came down. I grabbed a pen, grabbed a paper and just started writing. And it was like a whole new level of my business at that point. So this particular conservation fund happened in a very similar way.

00:05:26 I was at my mastermind event in February and Sedona with a whole bunch of other incredible humans. And I was chatting with another, another couple and they are wedding photographers. And conservation is one of the causes that are super close to their hearts. And they were talking about their trips to Africa and they have like print shop that they, you know, take some of their images to sell in that print shop to raise money for some of the conservation things that are going on in Africa.

00:05:56 And I was talking to them at dinner and I'm like, yeah, well, I'm going to have to come on that next Africa trip with you because that's right up my alley. And you know, and then I started thinking, I let them know. I'm like, Hey, if you ever need any connections, I still have a lot of connections in the zoological world.

00:06:10 And I went to bed that night and I woke up like four in the morning and it was another one of those digital downloads where like woke up and it was just like, boom, right in my head. And I couldn't go back to sleep actually for the whole rest of that event. I slept probably like four or five hours a night because I was so ridiculously,

00:06:30 ridiculously excited about where this new idea was going to lead me. So yeah, I woke up at four in the morning and it was just like, oh my gosh, Nicole, you have this giant platform of amazing animal loving photographers. You have an incredible network of people in

the zoological and conservation field. You have an incredible passion for all of these wild animals,

00:07:02 all of these wild places and just exploring the world. They all work together. Every single piece of my life up to now has prepared me for creating this new evolution, this new step from working in zoological industry for 13 years, to now running a photography business for almost the same amount of time and running this education platform, it's all come together into like the perfect mesh of all of my interests,

00:07:34 all of my passions. And the only way that I got there was by following my different interests, even when it seemed like I was stepping away from things. I remember vividly with two, when I was leaving my, my last due job. And I was kind of, you know, I knew I was retiring from the zoo community and I was tough.

00:07:59 I loved that job. I loved that career. I loved the people that I knew in that field. I loved everything about it, but it had just gotten to the point where I knew it was time for something new, something else and never in a million years. Did I have any sort of idea of what that was going to look like? And there is no way I would have ever said that it would look like what it actually looks like today.

00:08:27 It was just a kind of a leap of faith, but a leap of faith that you just knew, you just knew it was right. So then I started my photography business, started with families doing a little pets on the side because you know, back in 2010, I thought there's no way you can make this pet photography thing, a whole thing.

00:08:47 My tile times have changed. But yeah, so I did families and pets and did the photography thing and was just kind of following that passion and that interest and missing my zoo world, but still knowing I was at the right place for where I was supposed to be at that time. And then, yeah, fast forward to earlier this year, when all of these worlds aligned.

00:09:12 So why I'm telling you all this is because I want to just share with you kind of what this evolution looks like could look like. Like I said, everyone's journey, everyone's path looks completely different, but I just wanted to share with you what mine looked like and what commonalities I see from other people that have made like this big step in their life.

00:09:39 That feels a lot more in line that feels a lot more just, just aligned. Yeah. Aligned with who they are and waking up every day feeling like, oh my gosh, I can't believe I get to do this. This is absolutely incredible. Does that mean I don't wake up some days? And I'm like, oh my God, I'm so stressed out.

00:10:01 I have so much to do this day is actually one of those days where leading up to preparation for the summit, we're getting ready to open registration. Next week, there are

about 75,000 pages. We need to create an emails. We need to write in speakers to, you know, finalize schedules and presentations. And there are more moving parts then I really ever remember going on right now.

00:10:30 So just because you're aligned and you're following your passion and you're on the right path, doesn't mean that every day is easy. It doesn't mean that you wake up and just like, you know, sunshines and unicorns every day. And what it means is that despite challenges, despite hard days, you're still feel fulfilled. And you're still really excited about the mission and the vision.

00:10:57 If you're not excited about the mission and the vision and the direction that your life is going, well, let's start changing it. And you don't have to change it by changing everything at once. You can start taking little tiny steps. If it's photography that like lights your soul on fire, then you don't have to like quit your job tomorrow and go out and start working as a full-time pet photographer.

00:11:21 What if you just picked up your camera over the weekend? What if you volunteered at a shelter, what could you do to add a little bit more of that passion into your life? Here's a little piece of homework I want you to do. I want you to sit down and kind of write out all the different areas of interest you have in your life,

00:11:43 really kind of different buckets of you. These can be things like family, friend, relationships, your work, travel, hobbies, self care, just different pieces like that. And then under each of these buckets, write down different things that you do in these areas that kind of let you up that make you feel great, that you can't wait to do again.

00:12:12 And then ask yourself how you can start doing more of those in your life and look at the buckets and say, is there a bucket here that maybe I'm ignoring like healthy eating exercise, not fun in the moment, but good to do in the term. But yeah, but even just different things that you're interested in. Are you interested in, I don't know,

00:12:38 Greek mythology, can you start reading some books on that? That was a random example, but what is it that just kind of peaks your interest, explore it because that is truly how you find your path to whatever the next evolution of you is, or to find more fulfillment in your life or just to become the next higher version of yourself is just exploring and following these little inklings,

00:13:07 these little ideas, and then by getting present to actually writing out the different areas in your life that bring you joy, you're able to start to focus on making conscientious decisions to bring more of that into your life. And then the gratitude increases and all the good things, just continually to Uplevel and increase your life. So that's my homework for

you guys this week,

00:13:35 sit down, write down the different things, write down the different things. You're interested in. Write down the different paths of interests you want to go down, whether you want to be, you know, I'm imagine stick out with me here, stick with me for a minute. If you're listening to this podcast, I bet it's a safe bet to say that you're interested in pet photography.

00:13:59 I am just Sherlock Holmes over here. Anyway, whether you're interested in that pet photography is a way to build a business, or if you're just interested in a hobby or if you don't know what that interest is, but you're just like, oh, I don't know. I want to explore it. Do that. Just start to follow that path. And then the path will become more clear for you.

00:14:22 Now, if your path does include pet photography, I have a path for you. And that is the hair of the dog summit, which coincidentally full circle on this episode is going to be benefiting the new hair of the dog conservation fund. So learn pet photography, help wild animals all at the same time, win-win win for everyone. You definitely don't want to miss it.

00:14:50 Jump on over to [www.pet](http://www.pet) photography summit and jump on the wait list. Or depending when you're listening to this registration might be open, but the summit is going to be held November 2nd through fourth, and it's going to be all about the craft and business of pet photography. And the registration is only a \$10 donation to the hair of the dog conservation fund. And you can join all of our presentations live.

00:15:16 If you do want to have lifetime access to the presentations, there is an opportunity to upgrade to VIP, all access pass. And as part of that pass, you also get a metric ton of bonuses from some of our different instructors as going to be absolutely incredible. And I can't wait to see you guys on the summit, but in the meantime, I want you to be exploring these passions and I would love absolutely love.

00:15:45 If you would share with me any insight that you might've gained from this quick little, 15 minute episode into your life, your passions, where you're going to go next, what you're excited about because when you guys get excited about things, I get excited about things. One of my favorite things about running the hair of the doc community is being connected to all of you guys and seeing just where this crazy world of pet photography can take.

00:16:15 You. I've seen so many different photographers just following their passion. That takes them to totally different areas, you know, mindsets, wildlife conservation. Some of it is to, you know, shelter dogs. Some of it is to Gallegos and Spain, some of it's to documenting the stories of senior dogs. There are literally kazillions. Yeah, I'm going to go with that.

00:16:43 There's literally kazillions of different, like little niches in the whole pet

photography passion that you can claim as your little passion project. So just keep following that path. Let me know where it's leading you. And in the meantime, go check out the summit@www.pet photography, summit.com. And I will see you guys again next week. Have a great week. Everybody talk to you soon.

00:17:12 If you enjoy this podcast episode, go ahead and take a screenshot of this episode on your phone and posted up there on your Instagram stories and be sure to tag us at hair of the dog academy. And we would just love to see how you're listening and a full disclosure. Sometimes we just like to give away a little pet photographer swag in the form of hair of the dog t-shirts and sweatshirts.

00:17:37 So what are you waiting for? Go ahead and share that screenshot of this episode. And don't forget to tag us hat hair, the dog academy. And while you're there, maybe you want to jump on over to our account and see what we're up to on the gram would love to connect with you. Thanks for listening to the hair of the dog podcast.

00:17:55 This was episode number 107. If you want to check out the show notes for access to any of the links that we shared in this episode, simply go to [www.hairofthedogacademy.com/](http://www.hairofthedogacademy.com/) 1 0 7. Thanks for listening to this episode of hair of the dog podcast. If you enjoyed this show, please take a minute to leave a review. And while you're there, don't forget to subscribe.

00:18:20 So you don't miss our upcoming episodes online thing. If you are ready to dive into more resources, head over to our website@wwwdothairofthedogacademy.com. Thanks for being a part of this pet photography community.