

Nicole Begley

Hey everybody. Welcome back to the Hair of the Dog podcast. I'm your host Nicole Bagley, and today I am talking to Krista from Krista Marie Photography and also the She Calls Her Shots podcast. And we are talking all about a super sneaky little two-minute trick that you can do to change the direction of your life and your business in no time flat.

Now when you listen, you're gonna be like, "That doesn't seem like that would do anything." Yeah, no, it does. It does a lot. And yeah, no matter what your goals are in your life, you're definitely going to wanna take part of this episode. So stay tuned.

Intro

Welcome to The Hair of the Dog podcast. If you are a pet photographer ready to make more money and start living a life by your design, you've come to the right place. And now your host pet photographer, travel addict, chocolate martini connoisseur, Nicole Begley.

Nicole

Hey everybody. Nicole here from Hair of the Dog Podcast. We are back for another week. And this week I am very excited to bring you a new guest we haven't had on the podcast before. We have Krista from Krista Marie Photography based out in the San Francisco Bay area, and we are talking all about what we always talk about here. So more secrets to our success. And I know you guys are gonna love this conversation. So Krista, welcome to the podcast.

Krista Marie Lynch

Thank you, Nicole. I'm so thrilled to be here.

Nicole

Yay. Yeah. I'm so excited to have you here. Before we dive into kind of these principles of success and some different techniques people can use to propel their business forward, tell me a little bit about yourself and your photography business and how you got started in this whole crazy world.

Krista

Yeah, definitely. It's been a journey. So I actually started my photography business while I was still in college back in Florida and didn't really know what I wanted to do with it. It just kind of felt like a really fun way to spend my weekends and my extra time and make a little bit of extra money. And fast forward, my first year in, I mostly did, I kind of started off in weddings. I started second shooting for my roommate in college at the time, actually she had her own business. And fast forward a year later, I shot my first wedding, didn't think I would ever be able to do it, and then was like, Well, I guess I am gonna do this for real. And then, you know, took on any sort of types of projects, like things for sororities or groups or events started kind of just like branching out and seeing what really felt right. And at the time, weddings and engagements felt really good.

And then in 2014, I relocated from Florida to California, kind of had to restart my whole business. Which is a whole conversation in itself, which you probably are also familiar with. And still continue to do a lot of weddings and engagements. And in the last couple of years have

added in more branding photography, but then in 2020, as most photographers can probably relate to, also had that moment of, I think I wanna do more. Like what is it that I feel like I'm missing? So I also launched my own podcast and then also some one-on-one coaching. So that's been kind of my journey.

Nicole

Yeah. Excellent, excellent. Yeah, I've never done weddings. I know a hundred percent that weddings are not for me, it's one of those things that it's like, oh, people love them or it's a no, no way.

Krista

Absolutely.

Krista

Well, and after 12 years now, I'm, I'll be totally honest with you, I'm, I'm still taking on some weddings, but very, very few and branding is really fun.

That's like a real outlet for me. And it's a lot less stressful than weddings. But it's so funny that you say that cuz I think, like, I take photos of my dogs all the time, not very good ones. And usually just on my cellphone. So it's so funny cuz when I see people who do pet photography, I'm like, Oh man, how, like, how do you get, how do you do it? It seems like it's magical art. So, you know, it's like everyone kind of has their own ... their strength.

Nicole

Oh, a hundred percent. Yeah. No, there is some voodoo magic involved in that. But it actually reminds me of a story back when I was in Pittsburgh and I needed an assistant. It was like a midday shoot and winter and there was snow on the ground and it was the only time this client could do it. And usually it would be fine because it's cloudy 95% of the time. And Pittsburgh in the winter. But this day had like bright, brilliant sun, I'm like, Oh, I'm gonna need an assistant cause I need to use a light.

And she was a family, toddler baby photographer. And as I'm setting up this dog again and again and again, she's like, "How, how do you do this?" So I'm like, "I don't know. How do you photograph babies?" Like, this is why we all work.

Krista

It's so funny. Like you, there really is the specialty for everybody.

Nicole

Yes, for sure. For sure. Oh my gosh. All right. So awesome. Yeah. So when you were kind of building that business and, and moving from market, you know, one market to another, kind of, what went through your mind or were you worried about that move? Was it stressful? How did you keep all of those voices in the back of your head from just eating you alive? Because they're very loud for all of us.

Krista

Yes. They're so loud. And it's funny cuz what we're gonna talk about today, creative visualization, there was a lot of that that happened without me really even knowing what it was at the time when I wanted to move, because the backstory on that was that I had grown up in Florida, I'd lived there my whole life and was very much ready for a move.

So California, the idea of moving felt in itself very expansive and like a very positive thing. And so I had wanted it for so long that, you know, how am I gonna do this? How am I gonna do this? I got really caught up in the how, and I would find myself getting really frustrated, feeling like it was never gonna happen.

I finally was like, I have to change this narrative in my head because it's not gotten me anywhere. So I think I just got to the point where I was like, I need this to happen. What do I need to do? And so I, I stopped telling myself if this happens, like, you know, if this move, and I just was like, it was, you know, January the perfect time of year, right? Everybody's setting new goals. And I was like, this is the year it's gonna happen. I don't know how, but I put it on my calendar, whatever it was, I, I said by December, whatever like that, I will be there.

And I put it on my calendar and was like, I'm gonna change the narrative. I'm gonna change the way I think about it. I, I took my dogs to the dog park and people would ask me like, Oh, what do you do? And I would tell them, Oh, I'm a wedding photographer, I'm moving to California. And they're like, Oh, that's awesome. And I'm like, Yeah.

In my head I'm like, I had no idea of how that was gonna happen, but I let myself start to just live in the possibility of this is happening, this is happening.

And what it did is it opened me up for, for ways for me to make it happen. I will say I was working full time. So I had actually grown my business and worked full time for about 10 years.

So I knew that I was likely going to get a job and that was going to be the thing that was gonna allow me to move. Still didn't know what job, didn't know how again, but I let myself just start believing in the possibility of what that was gonna look like. And that inspired me to then, OK, well what do I need to do?

Well, I need to go home at night. I need to work on my resume. I need to apply for jobs. Like if this is gonna happen, I need to put in the work, you know. And so every day, literally every day I would come home, I would pour myself a glass of wine, I'd write cover letters, I'd apply for jobs.

And in three months I reached out to a company, they flew me out for an interview, they offered me the job. And then like within six weeks after that, I made the move. And so it was like June and I was there and I was just like, how did this happen? And it felt kind of like this miraculous, how did this happen?

But at the same time, it was like the first thing I had to do was like actually believe that it was possible, which then inspired me to take the action that I needed to take because if I just kept sitting back, no one was gonna offer it to me, I had to put in the work to actually make it happen.

And so, but I, but I can tell you that the thing that changed that was for shifting my mind, my mindset, I had, I had to actually believe that it was possible because up until that point it was just this big like, how could I ever do this? How could I make this happen? It felt so out of reach and then I just had to tell myself like, no, like, we'll figure out the how. I just have to ... I have to set it into action.

Nicole

It's amazing how the way we phrase questions to ourselves makes such a huge impact in the possible outcomes. So I usually like to say, you know, generally questions to start with why, why is this, why is that, like, are usually as a general rule not helpful. Usually how is more helpful. But in situations like this, when you're using the how, but it feels so completely overwhelming of just like, I don't, I, I don't, don't know how, if I knew how I would be doing this.

So I think anytime we're asking ourselves questions and we feel just that like, oh, just that heaviness around them, is there another way that we can phrase it? You know, that you went from "how can I do this" to "what do I need to do to do this?" which is so much more empowering.

And even if you don't have the 47,000 steps that you need to do before you move to California, like you at least know maybe one through three.

Krista

Exactly.

Yep. The first thing I needed to do was I needed to write cover letters and I needed, you know, it's like I, and I had to get on calls with recruiters and talk through like, it was like I just, I knew I had to take one step after one step. And there were some times where it was like I'd get on these calls with certain jobs and I'm like, is this even enough money? California's expensive.

And I'm like, I don't know, but I'm gonna just get on the call anyway. You know, and you just, you get the practice you need and you have the conversations you need and yeah, I had no, you know, you kind of have, we like to plan and especially if like business owners, we like to plan, we like to have structure, but there's no way that you can plan for what the outlook is actually going to look like.

So as like you said, as long as you know that next step, that first thing that you need to do, that's all you need to know.

Nicole

And so many times too, I feel like sometimes the path that we take it might feel like it's, you know, not a straight path. I feel really strongly that most of that path, like it's there for a reason. Like you're getting these different experiences or these different little things. You just, you might not know how it's gonna turn out and it might turn out totally different than what you originally envisioned, but it's still there to serve us.

Your story about you moving to California reminds me, I lived in Florida for a while too. I grew up in Pittsburgh, but after my husband graduated from vet school, we were living in Orlando, I was working at a large company run by a rodent, a bird show there.

Oh yes. A large company that's run by a rodent. I worked in Orlando doing the bird show at their animal park. And you know, we were down there for a while and then I moved over and worked for, that was a contract position. I then moved over and worked for the mouse himself in their animal care department. And it had gotten to the point where Orlando's very transient so all of our friends would move and we're like, ah, like, and all of our friends that left Pittsburgh after college were moving back to Pittsburgh, we're like, oh, we kind of wanna move back to Pittsburgh.

And I kid you not, we had this conversation, my husband and I, and like a week or two later I went to a conference and I was talking to somebody, I'm like, oh yeah, we might wanna move back to Pittsburgh. And she's like, oh, well the old contract company I worked for is looking for someone to go run the program at the aviary in Pittsburgh, go talk, you know, go talk to basically my old boss. So I did. And he is like, oh great, I'll put you in touch with the director at the aviary.

And like I came home from the conference and I'm like, I think I have a job for Pittsburgh, like starting in like a month. You know, like I wasn't really ready to move quite that soon, but OK. And you know, it turned out that it was the best long-term move even though I'm not working in the zoological field anymore.

Like I wouldn't change any bit of that journey. So yeah, you just have to be open. It is.

Krista

And it's so amazing, right? It's like the, we have to just let ourselves be open to it. And it is, it is so interesting because we start to retrain, like the thing that I love about kind of creative visualization in general is like we, it's like going to the gym where the more, the more times you practice something, the more muscle you build around it, the easier and kind of the, the more natural it becomes. And when we start to train our minds to, to think in this way, right? Cause we so naturally gravitate towards negative thinking. We as humans are like programmed to survive.

And that is, so we tend to go towards the negative thoughts, but when we can reprogram our brain to look more towards this possibility, this expansive space of what's possible, we start to find opportunities like this, right? Like you'll start to make connections with people, You'll hear something that they say a little bit differently because you're thinking about the possibilities of what can be.

And sometimes it's like there's these opportunities that we would totally miss out on if we weren't in the space to be able to fully hear them. If that makes sense.

Nicole

Oh, a hundred percent.

And I mean that totally translates to business too, that there are so many opportunities. So many times, you know, students that I work with, and I'm sure yours too that like just photographers in general, I feel like they often get in this like, ugh, I'm stuck. How do I get more clients? I can't find more clients. I need more clients. And they're just in this like place of just despair about finding new clients where like a shift in that of like, okay, how can we, how can we find the people that are meant to work with me?

Like there's opportunity everywhere, especially pet photographers. I mean, how many people have dogs now after the pandemic? I mean everybody, There's yes, so many opportunities out there. So what are some different ways or exercises you have to use as kind of creative visualization to help people take the next steps in their business?

Krista

Yeah, well I think, I love that example. And I'll touch on that just first really quickly is like exactly to your point is that instead of that question of I, you know, needing to find clients, I feel like they're not out there. Is just knowing there are so many clients out there. Like my clients are out there, how can I put myself out there in the right places to find them?

And when we start asking ourselves the right kinds of questions, our brain will start to naturally come across the answers, which I think is so great. But yeah. But with creative visualization, I like to keep it very simple. Cuz like I said, when I actually first kind of practiced this, I didn't even know that I was practicing it in like a, like terms. I just got to the point that I was, I felt so, I don't wanna use the word desperate, but I felt so desperate to, to make this move that I was like, I'm just gonna do whatever I feel like I need to do in order to make this happen.

And now I've learned, oh, there are actually like things that I didn't implement that, that are helpful. Right? But like I said, I think the first thing is you have to, you have to first just fully believe in the possibility of what you can do. Like if you, if you don't believe that you are capable of doing something, you don't have to immediately believe that you're ready. And I think this is where some people get tripped up because it's like, well, you know, maybe I'm not ready for this yet. That's OK. But just believe that you are capable of figuring it out and getting there.

You, you have to believe in your ability to figure things out and to, to get there. So any mindset work that you need to do first and foremost to really understand how capable you are as human being is kind of number one.

And if you don't have it, borrow it from other people. Like find the people who do have it and borrow it from them.

Nicole

Along those lines. I mean that's definitely one of those things of people breaking like the, it's a five-minute mile, or even the four-minute mile. I don't know how fast they're running the mile these days, but for the longest time they're like, oh, it can't be done. It can't be done. And then one person did it and then it was like boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. Everybody

started doing it because, oh, it can be done.

And one of the other hacks I love for this, when you don't really quite believe it yet, you know, we talk about like affirmations and you know, saying these things and if you can't believe like I am, whatever, "I am a successful pet photographer." Like what about saying "I am becoming," like that you can believe. the journey. So, okay, perfect. I love it. All right. What was your second step there?

Krista

Yeah, so I love, I love that it's an understanding that it is a process and that you will continue to grow. I think another thing is really getting clear on who it is that you, whatever this goal is, whether it's a business goal, whether it's a move, whatever it is that you wanna tackle, understanding who you want to be in those moments and starting to bridge that gap from who you are now to who you want to be in the future.

Cuz sometimes that person feels really far away and that can also keep our goals feeling really far away. So, and this is gonna sound so silly, and this is the funny thing about mindset, is sometimes the silliest things that feel like they take up no time and space are actually the things that when you practice them over and over again, actually make the biggest difference.

So for example, when I was moving, or when I wanted to move and I just was trying to reprogram my brain to think about the positives and who I wanted to be when I got there, I started to, in any situation that was unpleasant/boring, so for example, like the grocery store, right?

Like going to the grocery store after work, I usually was filled with all this stress from work and all this stuff and this, these things that I didn't wanna think about. And so I would put in my headphones, I would put in some of my fit, like just inspirational, favorite music that's kind of like pumped me up. And I would think about, I would imagine myself, OK, this is me in California shopping for dinner and I would like put myself, obviously I was still in the same place, but I would mentally put myself in this place that I wanted to be in the future.

OK, well what type of food am I gonna make? Like, how am I going to eat? You know?

And starting to like actually visualize like, who is this person that I wanna be? How can I start kind of becoming her now? So, you know, that type of thing. Or if you're in a situation. like you're waiting in line for something or whatever, it's like you can start to practice this, OK, I'm gonna kind of transport myself into this future version of me and how do I wanna be, how do I wanna show up and who do I wanna like be in that moment? And it sounds silly and it sounds like it doesn't make a difference, but when you could, you actually start to not only get the confidence that you actually are that person already, and it doesn't need to take this big massive transformation, you don't need to become this entirely new person.

But it also starts to ... I just totally lost my train of thought. You, it helps you to train, it helps you to transform into, into who you wanna be. But it, it also just starts to, to train your brain and reprogram your brain right into thinking about again, like the possibility.

Nicole

And it becomes more real. And then like, depending on how deep on the quantum level you wanna get, like it's, it's attracting that energy which is attracting that future outcome and that future physical place.

Krista

I love to get, I never know. I'm like, I'm, I like to get a little woo, like I that little bit of the woo right in here, but It's also, oh great because I feel like there is, there is so much to that, right? It's this like the energy that you put out there and the energy that you attract. I 1000% believe in that. But I also believe there are a lot of practical, tactical things that are attached to it that also help, you know, like I said, it's not, it'd be great if you could just sit back and be like, I'm gonna manifest all the great things and then don't do anything and then it all happens. That'd be great. But yeah, it doesn't work that well.

Nicole

No, and you know, as you're talking about that too, it makes me think of like inspired action and when you start to put yourself in these just mental spots of, you know, thinking about the goals in your business or your personal life or whatever it is, and then maybe you're walking the dog or maybe you're in the shower and you just get this like random shot of inspiration of like, oh, what about if I tried that for marketing? Oh, what about if I offered this in my business? Like, that's not random.

Those are actual like basically a note from the universe saying, "Hey, that thing you want, this is what you should do."

Krista

Yes. Yeah. And it's so funny because I had listened to so many, like marketing, selling courses, all these things, podcasts, and like all of that is great. But I, I found myself getting so overwhelmed by feeling like I need to do what everyone else was doing.

My most creative, this is what I wanna do, this would be a great way of creatively expanding my business happened when I was taking a bath, like in a shower, going for walks, right? Not listening to anything and just sitting with myself. And so yeah, absolutely. Like you'll, those, those things are not just these random brainwaves.

You're letting yourself slow down and actually kind of listen to your own intuition of what do I feel like would feel really aligned and like good for me.

Nicole

Yeah. And I feel like there's a fine line too of, you know, knowing that it's the right path, because generally it gives you more energy, it feels expansive. Like you're like kind of leaning into it where maybe if it's the wrong path, you kind of like just have this like resistance.

And you have like, I get like a physical resistance slightly in my body where it's like, like it feels tightening. But there's a lot of people out there that might be like, Oh, I get this flash of

inspiration that I need to do this in my business. But maybe that thing might be slightly scary and slightly outside of their comfort zone. And so then, then that outside of the comfort zone's, like, oh, but this is scary. And then they'll be like, oh, see, now my intuition said I shouldn't do it. We're not saying that.

Krista

Yes, it's a different, it is a different feeling.

You will feel the resistance. The resistance is the same feeling that I get when I need to do my bookkeeping each month. And I'm like, I really don't wanna do this. It's this like dread of like, ugh, I don't wanna do this. Whereas the, I love it when people talk about the, cuz the fear of doing something scary can be also translated as excitement.

It just like is depending on how we look at it, right? It's like, well this does feel really scary and outta my comfort zone, but also really exciting. There's so much possibility here. But it takes going that extra step and like actually figuring out, is this actual resistance? Like, I really don't feel like this is good and in alignment for me.

Or is it, oh, this is scary. And think about the possibility of where it could go.

Nicole

But, but it's, yeah. Maybe it's like, this is scary, but is the potential outcome more exciting than the scary, you know? And it's probably worth it. So go talk to people, everyone.

Krista

Yes. Oh my gosh, yes, definitely.

Nicole

I love it. I love it. Oh, I just had a good thought and it went away. That's right. It'll come back. It'll come back. It's OK. It's all good. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Krista

Well there's actually gonna, kind of a follow-up to that. When we were talking about goals and things like that.

Cause I think one thing that I know that I got stuck in a lot, I actually was just at a conference this past weekend. It was amazing. There was incredible speakers. Like most conferences, you walk away, you're like really pumped up and jazzed and you have all these ideas and brainwaves. But, but one thing that I, I did kind of reflect and realize that I have felt a lot in growing my business, which listeners might be able to relate to, is a lot of the times we will kind of set these goals and these, these business things that we wanna do or these ideas and, and they're kind of just because we feel like we should, right?

And I think sometimes we, we really don't notice when it's happening. Like I feel like, I didn't notice this for a while, but for example, when I was starting my coaching business, obviously it felt really terrifying,

really scary. And I had worked with a coach before and I had seen different ways that people were doing it, but I kind of already from the get-go, put myself in this bubble of, well, this is what I've seen. This is what I know, and so this is how I'm gonna grow my business. And without even realizing it, I was putting myself in this box of who I was going to be. And I, I didn't realize until this past weekend and listening to the speakers and I was like, oh man, we do this so much in business where we do something because we feel like we should, we feel like it's the right next step.

And we start to kind of look outside of us to see how other people are doing it. And we're, we put our, we we close off all these other opportunities of ways that we could be able to do it different because we don't see it happening and we just kind of follow the steps of what we know.

And all of a sudden it's like, why you, you start to realize this doesn't feel like I thought it would, like, this doesn't feel maybe as aligned as I was hoping it was going to feel. But we don't realize it. It's because we've like, we've taken all of the creativity out of it and we've just followed this path that we've naturally set ourselves up for.

So I think it's really important when thinking about your goals is asking yourself kind of, have I put myself in this box of like, this is how it has to be done, this is how I see other people doing it. Or have we really sat and like really looked inside and asked herself, like, why is this important to me? And like, how, how do I wanna do it?

Nicole

Yeah. No, I think that's a great thing. Even when it like equates to learning a craft of photography or your business is like at the very beginning too, when you're new to business or new to photography. We don't know all the different ways. So it is very much of a, OK, I need education. Like I need to know, give me your tactics, give me this. And like, and it's a little bit of us like trying those things and following these recipes or you know, things like that.

But then you start to get a little bit of confidence and a little bit of experience and then you're able to start to really dial that in and be like, and start to question the, OK, is there a better way for me to do this? Because I see this all the time too, where I could give two photographers in similar markets, heck the same market, the same marketing plan, and one of them will do it well and one of them will not because it's not a line for somebody where it's like playing to the strengths of somebody else.

So, you know, I, so many of my students like just wanna know like, what's the one thing? Like give me the secret, the secret thing. And there is no secret thing. Yeah. I mean the secret thing is to believe that it's possible and to like just get quiet with ourselves and, and have a starting point of some ideas.

But then asking ourselves like, all right, which, which one feels most aligned to how I wanna live my life and run my business? You know, I just had somebody on the podcast, one of my students last month, she had her first \$20,000 month running her business without phone calls because she has like a son that she takes care of at home with special needs and these other

things.

So she's built her business around the life that she wants to live and has non-negotiables that other photographers don't. That she runs a super successful business. Like yeah, we can all do things how we wanna do them if we have the confidence in listening to ourselves and, and the energy of believing it's possible.

Krista

Yeah, I mean, and especially like to this point, like playing to your strengths. If for some people they might love, they might be very extroverted and they may, you know, they may feel a lot of stress with online stuff or having to build that out. People could build a very successful business going to their community events. Like starting off there, talking with people, building in-person relationships. For other people who are introverts, they may look at that and see someone who's built a successful business and think, oh, well does it mean I have to do that? No, absolutely not.

You can use your strengths to do it in the way that you do it. But yeah, it's really, it's again, like you said, it's coming back to that confidence of knowing that I can build this in a way that feels right for me and it doesn't have to look like somebody else.

And it might take a little bit longer than I think it will, but it doesn't mean that it's not working. And I think that's where like we can get really held up in, well, especially in marketing nowadays, it's like, oh I, you know, like I imagine she has built her business over time to create this amazing financial progress that she's made, right? But I think when we, when we believe this narrative of like, oh, it's gonna be six months, I'm gonna make all this money. It's like, well it says who, right?

Nicole

And I, human nature, you're saying it's human nature to look at the negative. It's also human nature not to notice any of the strides that we've taken and the progress.

Krista

Yeah, the progress. Absolutely.

Nicole

Like our brains are wired to look at the gap of how much we haven't done and how much more there is to do and how far behind we are and why that means we're never gonna be successful rather than, oh look what, look how far I've come.

Krista

And I think that's one of the, one of the things I love about, so starting to practice creative visualization. There's such simple ways to do it, like the practical things that we talked about earlier. But even just setting aside to think about, you know, what are the things that are important to me? What are the things that I wanna do? And when you start to train your brain to just like quiet itself, to really think about this, think about where you wanna go, where you

wanna be to that point exactly. You start to kind of naturally celebrate your successes a little bit more in your day to day life because you're already programming and training your brain to think about where you wanna go and the things that you wanna do.

And when you can stop to ask yourself, OK, this is the person I wanna be and kind of going back to what we talked about earlier. OK, well how can I start being her today? And then you start showing up as her today and you'll naturally start to celebrate those things more because you're looking for them. But so often we just don't, we don't look for any of those things. We're always looking for the like, how is this gonna grow? How is this gonna work? But when you start to think about things differently and ask yourself different questions, you actually start to notice these things more cuz you're actually like tuned in to seeing them.

Nicole

It's just like a gratitude practice, you know? That if we, if we take, that's what I tell everybody and when it's like in a funk, I'm like, sit down, write down 30 things you're thankful for, boom, like impossible to be in a funk anymore.

Krista

Yeah. Your perspective completely shifts.

Nicole

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. I realize too as we're talking about this that we never actually kind of defined creative visualization. I'm wondering if there's people out there that's still like, what is this creative visualization that they're talking about?

Krista

Yeah. You wanna know. Yeah, so the non, the way that I just like talk about it in general to make it not complicated is it is this practice of sitting and imagining who, who is it that I wanna be and where do I wanna go? What are the goals? What are the things that I, that I wanna do? And again, it's kind of just reprogramming to not think about the negatives quite as often cuz we are so used to that, the sciencey things, which I won't really go too far into because I am not a scientist, but the, the science behind it, and you can look it up, creative visualization, they've used it in all sorts of practices, but it's just this idea that the, there are neural pathways in our brain and the more that we practice certain things, the stronger those neural pathways become.

So it makes sense. Like I said earlier, the more times that you practice something, the more habit kind of that you build around it, the stronger the pathways become. So when we focus on things like worrying fear-based thoughts, right?

There are certain neural pathways and things that will be activated in our brain. Whereas when we can start to retrain our brain to again think about things like create a visualization and sitting and doing that, we we're gonna strengthen that part of our brain instead. So that's the very non-sciencey science description. You can look it up, they'll explain it a lot more, but, but it is actually changing our, our brain. Like we are actually actively changing the way that our, our brain functions.

And I think that's the most incredible part about this is sometimes it's easy to kind of just like think about this as, oh I should do this. I don't, you know, it's not important. Is it really important to take a couple minutes each day?

And the answer is, it is because that's gonna be the way that you're gonna actually make real change.

Nicole

Yeah. Do you have kind of a process for your daily practice? Like if somebody wanted to make that a habit, do you have any advice?

Krista

Yeah, So I'd say the first, the first thing I like to tell people, cause when this feels new it feels like, it's like where do I start? What do I think about ...

Nicole

... and how am I doing this wrong?

Krista

Exactly. It's so, and I realize, cuz it's it, if you're anything like me, like I also, I love structure. I love when someone tells me, this is how you do it. This is where you start, this is how you think about it.

And the downside to this is that there is, there is no but that being said, I also understand that as you do it more, it'll start to become more natural and you can kind of start to think about it. So the, the way that I like to introduce it for someone who's not familiar with it, the thing that I would suggest doing is there's this thing called habit stacking. If you've read atomic habits, they talk about this a lot in the book. But it's really just finding, OK, what is something that I do every day for a couple minutes? Maybe it's like putting on makeup, making coffee, whatever it is that you do every day. Maybe you put a sticky note up somewhere. Maybe you set a reminder in that place where you're going to be to start this practice.

So that way you're able to do it consistently. Even if you only do it once in the day, it's a great place to start. And the thing that I like to start with is really just, let's just start by asking ourselves, what's one thing that I'm excited for in the future? I think this is a really easy question because it starts to at least open us up to this question, like this bigger question of, you know, what do I wanna be? What do I wanna be doing? I think for some people in the very beginning that question feels too far and a little bit too scary and a little bit too hard to think about. So just start by asking yourself, OK, what's one thing I can do every day? And start this practice of maybe one to two minutes of thinking about what's something I'm excited about?

So maybe, maybe you are gonna be traveling to a new city to do a portrait session or maybe you have something that you're looking forward to that that feels like this fun, exciting opportunity. Start to think about and picture yourself like close your eyes if you can imagine what it's gonna feel like to be driving there. Like what kind of things, what kind of scenery are you gonna be seeing?

What's it gonna feel like to actually, what's the weather gonna be like? Like start to really picture. And I think for some people they're like, well, but I don't know.

And I'm like, but that's the whole point is that you don't have to know. Is it, you kind of start to create this reality of what it is that you wanna ...

Nicole

It's like when you're reading a book and you're like creating the character, you've probably done this, you read the book, you create the character and then you see the movie, you're like, this is not how I pictured it, this is wrong.

Krista

Exactly! And so, and it's, and again I think it's just giving yourself the grace of understanding that this is a growth process. And just start just, just start with this one thing. Ask yourself this one thing. Start to get your brain kind of warming up to this idea of you visualizing things.

And I actually realized recently I didn't realize that I am a very visual person in the sense that I can close my eyes and think about something and see it very vividly. I actually just became aware of the fact that not everybody is like that, right? I think I took it for granted and I just thought that everyone could do that. So also understand that you might sit down to do this and be like what are you talking about? I don't see anything. So give yourself some grace if that is the case.

I don't, I think that it can still be a practice again that you can build over time, but, but give yourself grace on how it feels. It may not feel comfortable, it might not, it might feel a little clunky in the beginning, but just starting the practice is great.

Nicole

And I would, I was literally our brain waves right here. Cause I was literally just gonna dive into that same thing that I would imagine it's also very effective if you are a writer versus like visualization just to sit down and be like, today is whatever day and I just moved to California, blah blah, blah. And you just absolutely let it flow and let it, right?

Or if somebody's very, you know, just like more on the feeling like, can you transport yourself to that and feel that feeling? Cause those feelings that we get from the visualization, from the writing, from the feeling is really what is driving us there and pulling that reality towards us.

And then sometimes too, this might sound a little crazy, but like if you're like, we've now known that we need to ask better questions, but if you're like, I don't even know what question to ask, dude, ask yourself before you go to sleep. I've answered so many questions in my life. Like before I go to sleep, I'm like, hey, hey subconscious mind, I need to know x, y, z. Can you tell me? Like nine times out of 10, like I'll wake up in the morning and be like, oh, where the, oh wait, that's the thought. Oh, where's a piece of paper?

Krista

And I like, I've, so I've recently started digging more into the subconscious, like we won't go too far into that. But I'm like, I'm, I feel like now I've kind of gotten to the point where I am, I'm digging into that more. It is, it is so incredible. And I think we just downplay how incredibly capable our brains are.

Like we really, truly, I truly think that we, well and there's, there's a, there's a study that says we only as humans, we only access like a certain percentage of our brain. Which is also astonishing cuz it's already so amazing and we're not even accessing all of it. And so yeah, like digging into that and just starting to understand that again, it all goes back to like, we are so capable, we are so capable of doing that.

Nicole

Yeah. It's just absolutely fascinating. Yeah. And just the, the processing power of our brain, like the conscious side and the subconscious side, it's, it's just incredible. And when you ask it these questions, like it has to look for the answers.

Like there is no other option. So depending what questions you're feeding it will a hundred percent determine like the direction that your feelings that your life, that your thoughts, that your business go. So it's just so important to, to just be asking at those good questions and, and having that goal in mind.

I mean, how many people do you talk to that you're like, hey, what are your goals?

Krista

You're like, I'm not sure. Yeah, I haven't created them.

Nicole

I'm not sure. Like I, yeah, like it was to go to the gym, but now it's February and I don't, so I don't have any.

Krista

Yeah. Well and that's actually, I'm glad you mentioned that cause that brings me to another thing I wanna talk about, which is really figuring out like what is your deeper why? Kind of going back to when we talked about, earlier about following this path because it felt like the thing that you should do and putting ourselves in a box. It's the same things with our goals where I feel like our goal might feel like a deep goal and you might say it to someone and they might say, wow, yeah, that's a great goal, but when it comes down to it, it might not be deep enough to keep you going when things feel hard.

And I know I've run into this a lot, right? Like as, as a coach, as a photographer, I'll have this goal that looks really nice and you tell people and they're like, oh wow, that sounds so great and impactful. But the reality is, is that when things get tough and we don't wanna show up and we feel like we wanna throw in the towel and give up and then we look at that goal that everybody loves, it doesn't resonate on us on a deep enough level to be like, this is why I show up, this is why I do what I do. And a lot of times when I talk with clients or anyone, it's, they have this goal that feels like it's deep, but it's not actually the deepest level of what they really need

to continue to show up. And it's hard cuz the best way to do that is you have to get really comfortable sitting with yourself and figuring out what is it. Like why am I doing this? What is my purpose? Why do I wanna keep showing up?

Cuz it's really easy to be like, I love to make people happy and provide these memories for them and it's, and that's all great and wonderful, but when business, for lack of a better word, when it feels like it sucks, it's like that's not gonna be the thing that's gonna help you really keep moving forward.

Nicole

Yeah. Yeah. I think I'm making this up, but it's like seven levels basically of why before you ever get anywhere near like the actual reason why you're doing what you're doing.

Krista

Yeah. Yeah. And I think sometimes we feel a little bit ashamed cuz I think when it gets down to it, some people, you know, they don't wanna say, I'm doing this for money. Right?

Like, maybe your deep goal is I want to be able to support my family. I want to be able to be the person who earns enough and can take us on vacations and depending on your money mindset that you feel really icky and you don't wanna tell people that. And then we create all this shame and guilt and it's like, there is nothing wrong with that being that thing drives you forward. You have to like just learn to accept this is important to me and this is why I do what I do, but we, we create all these other feelings around what's OK and what's not OK. And then we end up not honoring the deeper thing that we actually want out of life.

Nicole

I mean, cuz so many things we're where you spend a whole lifetime of teachers and parents and society telling us what's acceptable and what's not. I mean, how many people when they wanted to pursue photography we're like, well that's a great hobby, but what are you gonna do for real, for work?

You know, like, like it's just all of these things. And one of the ways that I believe you can start to, to find that purpose and that path is by following the things you're interested in. Like if you're interested in it, there's a reason. Like, I'm probably never gonna be a dancer because it's not something that's like, oh, I'm really interested by that ballet. Like, oh, I'm interested in the fact that anyone can do that. I'm like, that is incredible. Like, but like there's you, you just follow these little paths and turn over these little leaves and pretty soon you look back and you're like, whoa, how'd I get here? But this is exactly where I need to be.

Krista

Yeah. And I also, something that was really important, which I don't, I don't know if a lot of people, I assume a lot of people would be able to relate to, but I know I felt a lot of fear around because I was working full time while also growing my business. And I did feel a lot of time this pressure from other people, oh, well you're not really a real business owner unless you do it full time. And I think along those same lines of figuring out, exploring these different avenues, following the things that you wanna do and letting go of the, I have to do it in this certain way.

Like, you don't have to leave your job and quit and do photography full time and like that.

Like sometimes I think we get caught in these feelings of, well I feel like I have to do this, I have to make the leap. I mean, eventually yes, you will get to a point where OK, you know, it might still feel a little scary, but but you're not doing it from a place of, people have told me I need to do this and so I'm gonna do this.

If you wanna work part time, if you have something else that you do on the side, like keep doing that and let yourself explore and do the other things and don't believe any of the other voices that are like you. Again, you don't have to do it this one certain way in order to be a legitimate business owner. I do my business for 10 years while working full time and I was still just as legitimate then as I am now, so.

Nicole

Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Absolutely. Oh, I love that. Before we wrap this up, I want to leave our listeners with a, a challenge per se of what should we challenge them to do to spend like, I don't know, how many days does it take to make a habit? Should we encourage them to do like 14 or 21 days or maybe the next month?

Like until, this is gonna air mid-November, so until Christmas. Like can you take how much time a day, even if they don't have time, if they can take like a minute ...

Krista

Literally a minute or two minutes is all you need. And the thing you'll notice is like all of your subconscious thoughts will be like, it's only a minute or two. It doesn't make a difference.

Nicole

Right. This doesn't, what are you doing? This doesn't do anything.

Krista

So like challenge number one is to quiet those thoughts. And then challenge number two is, yeah, find two minutes something that you do on a day-to-day basis where you can set a little reminder for yourself, whether it's a post-it or what it is, and ask yourself one good question. And it can be, what am I really excited about? What am I looking forward to? Where do I wanna be this time next month? Asking yourself something expansive.

One question, two minutes for a month.

Nicole

And either visual watch it or grab that pen and a little journal and ...

Krista

Or if you're, if you, yeah, if you like to listen to things, record, I've also done this. Record yourself saying these things and then listen to them back and listen to yourself saying them. It's so powerful.

Nicole

Yeah. That's so powerful. Oh my gosh, this has been so good. I could talk about this stuff all day.

Krista

I know, me too.

Thank you. Thank you for being here with us. If you guys wanna hear from her, from Krista, she has a podcast called She Calls Her Shots podcast. So definitely look for her there, Krista, where else can people find, find you on the web if they wanna connect?

Krista

Yeah, so I'm also on Instagram. You can find me at [krista.marie.photography](https://www.instagram.com/krista.marie.photography), and that's, that's gonna be the, the place where you'll see me and like, please send me a DM. I, I, I'm a real person that answers and talks to people and all of that. So yeah, I would love to connect.

Nicole

Awesome. Very good, very good. Thank you again so much for being here. We loved having you and I can't wait to just hear about what you guys are all visualizing out there.

Please let us know if you found this impactful and we'll see you next week. Bye, everybody.

Krista

Yes. Thank you so much.

Nicole

Thanks for listening to The Hair of the Dog podcast. This was episode number 166. If you wanna check out the show notes for access to any of the resources we mentioned, simply go to www.hairofthedogacademy.com/166. Thanks for listening to this episode of Hair of the Dog Podcast.

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Thanks for being a part of this pet photography community.