

00:00:00,"Welcome to the Hair of the Dog podcast. I'm your host, Nicole Begley. And today we're talking about some time management, productivity, whatever you wanna call it. If you've ever wished you had more time to get more done towards your goals or have a better work life balance, or just be able to like take control of your schedule, you don't wanna miss this conversation."

00:00:20,"Stay tuned. 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. Hey everybody. Welcome back to the Hair of the Dog podcast. Who out there wishes they had more time?"

00:00:49,"Who out there has a to-do list that you feel like you never get done? Who out there wants some master lessons from our productivity Ninja, Heather Lahtinen. Oh yeah. Okay. I hear you all. You're ready for it. Heather, welcome back to the podcast. Thank you so much for having me on. One of my absolute favorite topics ever."

00:01:10,"Oh my gosh, same. I mean, I'm a sucker for any sort of productivity hack, and I know you are too. Actually, there was a time not that long ago when during your lunches you would like reward yourself for your downtime by watching like these super productivity hacks on YouTube Training. I actually still do that Nicole. So from, I have,"

00:01:34,"I do From 12 to 1230 I have on my schedule to eat lunch. And as a bonus, if I, and I usually am on track with my daily schedule, I get to watch more productivity videos, I have issues For sure. No, I understand. Like, it's like me looking at a fresh page when I'm gonna make a list. I'm like,"

00:01:55,"yeah, baby, let's do it. Anyway, so that's what we're gonna be talking about a little bit today. And yeah, we both love our productivity, but we've been testing something out for the past couple weeks, which is a whole new way to manage our day-to-day, to-do list calendar time. And when I say life-changing, that is not an exaggeration."

00:02:21,"It has been life changing. We're gonna get to that. But first, yeah, I want you to back up. Let's kind of set the stage for how this all happened. Yeah, I do need to back up because this is important. So one Sunday evening, I was watching a time management talk. Okay? There's nothing revolutionary there because I'm constantly feeding my mind with anything and everything related to business,"

00:02:43,"marketing, leadership, growth, productivity. But the thing is, this is important to note, is I'm actually not typically seeking out time management videos because I feel like I have a pretty good handle on my productivity. But I've gotta tell you, this is very dangerous thinking. When you think you know something, you miss the opportunity to learn and improve."

00:03:08,"So I intentionally sought out something that I anticipated. I would be rolling my eyes up. I thought, I'm gonna watch this video and I'm gonna roll my eyes and I'm gonna be like, I already know that I have everything figured out. Look at me. I'm so smart. Okay, So, so this also then would a hundred percent correlate to,"

00:03:29,"oh, I don't know, everything in our business that we're like, whatever. I've, I, I know that. I know that I'm not gonna listen there. There might be new nuances to certain things that you thought you knew, that you're like, oh, I never thought of it that way, or, oh, that's an interesting tweak. Yeah."

00:03:45,"And it's so important to explore those areas periodically, like with awareness that you think you know it all, but you actually don't. So it's funny, it was this, what I had in that moment was what I could only classify as arrogant humility. I was so full of myself. But I also do recognize, well, what if I think to myself,"

00:04:09,"what if I hear something in a new way or I implement differently? And I am so glad that I walked into this training with that attitude because I typically would've passed this up. I would've seen the title and I would've thought to myself, wow, I own time. So why would literally, the n the name of the training was one word and it was called time."

00:04:30,"And I thought, I own time. I have a good handle on this. Why do I need to watch this? Oh, maybe I'll pick something new up. But also, let me tell you where else my brain goes is like, how do I help people like you Nicole? Like I know that you have in the past had scarcity issues around Time in the past,"

00:04:48,"previously you've changed that in 20 minutes. You guys have heard that whole conversation on the podcast. But yes, no, it still creep up a little bit here and there. But I have made drastic, drastic changes. So part of my thought watching that training is like, how can I help Nicole or how can I help our friends in Elevate or at the academy,"

00:05:05,"because I might hear it in a different way that helps them hear it in a different way. So I'm just, I love training videos. Okay. I live for 'em. I'm just always learning and growing. Okay, so I'm watching this video. I, I'm sorry, I watched, this was a Sunday evening for some reason no one was home."

00:05:19,"It was kind of a strange evening cause I normally would not do that with, with family around. But I watched this training, I was getting ready for bed. And so, okay, I want, this is a totally separate line of thinking. I watched the video. I'm like, done. Okay, I got some ideas. I took some notes."

00:05:34,"I was gonna tell you about it. But, so this is a few hours later, I was asking myself questions about my business. This is just in general, again, not related to the video. I was like, how can I optimize when, what does my business need for me? And then this question is, what got me, what can I do differently?"

00:05:54,"I'm always looking for things that I can tweak just a little bit. You know, I'm, I'm a real big believer in like 1% change and micro habits and adjustments. So I asked myself, what can I do differently? And my plan was to go to sleep on that question. You know how we do that? We Oh yeah, Yeah, yeah."

00:06:11,"Ask, ask the subconscious mind. Ask your brain something. You've done good stuff Before you go to bed and it will work on it while you sleep. It's like a magic trick. It's

amazing. And it really does work. So I was climbing into, I cannot remember where my husband was, but he was not home. He must have had maybe something for work."

00:06:29,"But I was climbing into bed and I asked myself, what can I do differently? That was my question. I just wanted to go to bed with in the answer hit me instantly, kind of upside of my face, dramatic in dramatic fashion. I laughed out loud and I said, oh, I could schedule my free time. And the reason this was funny is because in that training,"

00:06:52,"she had talked about scheduling your free time first similar concept as profit first, where you pay yourself first out of your profit. You schedule your free time first. Okay, first of all, I don't schedule any free time because I think it's stupid. I would so much rather Wow, no judgment there. I would, I would work. I wanna be productive."

00:07:15,"But, so, okay, here's, here's what I'm saying. I'm listening to a training on time management. I'm having a totally different thought process in my mind. And it's like that thought, that question, I think you already pretty much, were pretty good at scheduling free time. For instance, you try to take Friday afternoons off, your weekends are pretty sacred."

00:07:34,"Your Sunday especially. Yes. Like you're, you're very good at at making sure you have some personal time where others I'm the problem, it's me might not be as good at doing that. And so, well, I am and I'm not. So I, I by default have to be good at that because I have two horses that I own. So I go to the barn like three hours a day."

00:07:56,"So therefore I do already have a heck of a lot of free time built into my calendar. But then my brain goes to, we already have it all in there. So like, you don't need to schedule more. Cuz there isn't anymore. Cuz look, you already use it all. Like you use more than your allotment of the average bear for free time."

00:08:13,"You've used all the free time. There's absolutely no more available, No for you stop it for you. No suit for you. Yeah, there's a scarcity time limitation issue there. But the reason this was ironic to me is because I was not, when I asked myself the question, what can I do differently? I was actually not thinking about productivity and time management at all."

00:08:34,"I was just thinking about different areas of my business. But my brain present, it's like, it's like these two concepts collided, which is why I love to learn and watch all different things from variety of industries. Because you never know when, like you're gonna be inspired by something over here combined with a question over there. They come together and you have this totally unique result or approach to something in your business."

00:08:57,"And that's what happened. And it was actually, I was excited and slightly terrified. Terrified. Yes. Yeah. No, I remember you were terrified. Slightly excited. I was like, I boxed you. And I said, oh, oh my gosh, I have to make this change because my brain told me I have to and I think it's gonna be really great,"

00:09:16,"but I also think it's gonna be awful. And I'm not sure how I'm gonna get through it or how I'm gonna approach

this. But my brain told me that I need to schedule my free time. Okay. And well, and it wasn't just that, it was schedule your free time and then schedule every, basically every hour of your week. It was Schedule."

00:09:32,"I think that was your bigger, at least from what I took out of your conversations, that seemed to be the bigger hangup for you than scheduling your free time. It was scheduling every hour of the week because that would remove any freedom. It felt too, too constricting. Too constricting. Exactly. And I felt like I couldn't breathe actually, when I thought about it."

00:09:53,"And so that weekend I decided to create a new approach to my calendar. But actually, I wanna pause there for a second and talk about first before we get into like what I implemented and then what I taught you and what you're doing. Before we go there, let's talk about like what we've tried in the past and maybe what has worked and what hasn't worked."

00:10:16,"Do you have any thoughts On this? Yeah, so I've done a lot of different things from lots of, lots of to-do lists, lots of trying to schedule. See actually this is what I did for a long time, is I would, I have my calendar that like everything goes into, but like there's a school calendar in there and my husband's calendar and this calendar and I know I can turn them off,"

00:10:41,"but like, I still kind of wanna see all the things. And I don't know, I can't, there's too cluttered for me to plan my week in that calendar. So I use this, this software, it's just a website. It's called Tweak, T W E E K, I think it's Tweak dot. So is the website. It's free."

00:10:59,"They have an upgrade for like \$30 a year or something. It's awesome. I love it. And it literally is just seven columns for each day of blank lines so that I can then just kind of map out my week of, all right, I, and I would always go in and put in all my commitments, like my calls and things like that into the schedule."

00:11:22,"And then I would list usually like, all right, these are the things I wanna get done this week. And it would start on Monday. And anything that didn't get done would go boop, boop, boop, boop, all the way down to Friday too. Boop boop. Oh, back to Monday. Until sometimes it'd be like, well shit,"

00:11:39,"I think I should just take those off of there cuz they're actually not getting done. So how important are they really? Yes. And, and so what would happen is I would have that on there, but there was never like the right time to work on it. It was always like, oh, I'm kind of too tired. Let me just do this now because there's no shortage of other things I could work on."

00:11:58,"I can be busy forever because there's always something I can be doing. And it became really easy for my brain to let me off the hook of doing the stuff I needed to do. Oh, wow. Okay. But that was, but to some degree it was working. I mean, you were Oh Yeah. No, it was fine. I mean,"

00:12:14,"I've been running these businesses like that for years. You know, it, it, it's, it works. But once you told me this new way we were doing it, I'm like, and I had the same reaction. I'm like, oh man, this sounds amazing and terrifying. Yikes. And I also had the resistance, and we'll

talk about our stories too of week two,"

00:12:31,"which were like the universe fired to blow everything up for both of us. And I'm like, it's just testing us. Yes, The universe is testing our resistance. The force is at work here. Well, but it's interesting because it was working to some degree and you're, you were getting things done. Yeah. And maybe you could be more efficient,"

00:12:48,"maybe not like, who knows. But like overall, before I came to you with this, like, I don't know, on a scale of one to 10, how satisfied were you with your approach to time management and productivity? Eight. Yeah. Like you felt good about it. Yeah, Same. Yeah. I would say I was an eight as well."

00:13:05,"I was like, I'm getting things done. And my approach was similar. I use a Google calendar and I also have multiple calendars that I, I turn them on and off when I feel overwhelmed. Yeah. I turn off Craig's and I turn off the personal one and I just look at work. But I would put my appointments on there and then every day I would create a top three."

00:13:26,"So top three most important things to get done today. And That's what I would start on Monday. But they wouldn't get done till like usually Friday Or maybe next year. But yes, they like Some of them. Yeah. The goal is to get those things done. And then I would try to periodically schedule blocks of time for like business planning and strategy thinking,"

00:13:45,"you know, the things, things that we work on. And I felt pretty good about it. I didn't have a scarcity, you know, thought around time. I was like, I own time. I'm getting things done. Like this is great. But I always did think I could probably be getting more done, but I just wasn't sure what was missing or how to address it."

00:14:06,"Well, let me tell you something with that lack of clarity. Is it any wonder you would never change your system? Like what I'm suggesting here is that for some people their system is not working at all. Okay, that's clear. Then we've gotta do something. But for some of us, your system might actually be working and that's dangerous because you don't know."

00:14:27,"You don't know. What's that last 2% like? Yeah, what am I gonna do to shift this? I if you would've a, so this has been about a month that we've been experimenting with this at this point. And if you would've asked me six weeks ago, Hey, do you, are you gonna be working on your time manage about your productivity or improving your approach to your tasks or your calendar system?"

00:14:50,"I would've been like, no, it's fine. No, I don't need anything. I'm good. Everything's working and I'm just so grateful. This is a program that I'm in. And I'm so grateful that I decided to press play on a course that was an hour long and it was simply called time. And let me, let me tell you one big lesson and we'll explain the process and what that looks like."

00:15:19,"But here's the biggest lesson. If you take away nothing from this podcast today, it is that you are giving yourself entirely too much time to get a task done. Period. Oh

yeah. What's that called? What It's some sort of principle where need time that you do expands to the time available. CDOs, Is it maybe, I don't know. It's somebody's principle and it's legit."

00:15:43,"Yeah, it expands. If you give yourself a week to do something, it's going to take a week. But if you gave yourself an hour of super focused time, you could get it done. You just wanna, you wanna give yourself more time to think, but you know what you're doing when you do that, you're actually giving your brain more reason to cultivate self-doubt."

00:16:06,"Hmm. You're giving yourself entirely too much time because your brain is like, oh, I can drum up all kinds of reasons you shouldn't be doing this or why this is wrong. Or you better do more research or you better figure this out. When you significantly and painfully limit the amount of time for any given task, you eliminate overthinking. There's simply no time to do it."

00:16:33,"You have to get it done. If I said to you this happens in Elevate, I don't know, on the regular, I was gonna say daily basis, but probably weekly. We'll, we'll ask something about goals or what are you working on this week? And for the month, let's say somebody will say, well, I wanna finish my pricing."

00:16:47,"And I'm like, great. You, you have till tomorrow afternoon. Why do you need, It doesn't have to be permanent. Why? I think they're thinking it's gotta be permanent. Correct. Yeah, You can change it. I was working with a one-on-one client this morning, one hour ago, and she said, well, I'm trying to establish my price for something."

00:17:04,"And I'm like, she's like, I need to schedule it and, you know, think about it. And I said, we actually have five minutes left on our call. Go ahead and just pick the number. And she looked at me a a little scared or confused and I was like, what, what is the harm in picking a number? You can change it,"

00:17:22,"Right? And you probably will change it. So why, why wouldn't you want to invest waste hours, days, weeks, months, months of time thinking about something that you're most likely going to change anyway? Wouldn't you feel better about just like, quickly making a decision That way when you go to change it, you're like, oh, well I,"

00:17:44,"I made it really quickly and now I have more data and information, so I'm going to, to make it better or refine it. If you gave yourself the freedom and flexibility to change your mind, you might be able to make these decisions faster. Yeah, absolutely. So are we gonna share, should we let people know or are we just gonna hold 'em in the dark?"

00:18:08,"Okay. Tell them. Okay, we should make them we. Yeah, no, no, just kidding. All right you guys. I mean it's truly, and I, I wanna go over like what we're doing and then I also wanna, like, I've learned quite a few lessons and we've been kind of changing this a bit. Like each week's been a little bit different and we're refining it,"

00:18:28,"just like you said, we made a decision, right? We put it in action and then as we went and we're like, oh, okay, well now I have more information. Let me adjust this. This piece isn't working for me. Let me adjust this. And that's

been just eye-opening. So why don't you go ahead and kind of explain where we started that first week and what that looked like."

00:18:47,"Okay. And also how long it took. I took me about the same, maybe not quite as long. I think it only took me maybe an hour to plan my week. This is the most embarrassing admission I will make today. You know, I'm making you say it. So, Oh my gosh. So the, here's, let me give you the premise and then where I struggled."

00:19:07,"So the, obviously you wanna plan things ahead of time because when you go into your day in reactive mode and you react to an email or a phone call or a text or social media, you are not being proactive and you're not getting the things done that really matter, right? So this is about shifting from reactivity to just being more Yes. Go You,"

00:19:28,"I was gonna say it's reactivity, but it's also the, like, I would find if when before I was starting to do this, I would spend, even if I knew, oh, today I am gonna work on academy revamp, I would spend half an hour like, well what piece of that should I do this? Should I do that? Where should I go over here?"

00:19:47,"Like, and that's even if I had an idea of what it was working on. Yes. Have you ever gone sat down at your desk, you're like, man, I've got all morning to work On my website. What do I do? What well, should I do website? Or should I update that pricing? Or should I work on this marketing thing?"

00:20:02,"Oh gosh, what's more important? Hmm? What? Oh, what are my, what are what? Yeah, like you just end up in this like limbo wasting your likely most productive time. Cuz this one you sat just sat down and are freshest. So yeah, it's those two pieces that I think are the key Important is thinking ahead of time,"

00:20:20,"doing the thought work ahead of time. So for me, this has been Sunday afternoon, but this could be Monday morning for you at the beginning of your week, whenever makes sense. I sit down and I ask myself, what's important this week? Like let's say it was a website revamp. And then I would say, okay, specifically what needs to be done?"

00:20:39,"I need to update the about page. I need to add new photos, I need to create blog posts, I need to update the pricing. I, whatever that is. I would very specifically list out all of these tasks in a similar fashion to how you would create a to-do list. But the to-do list cannot say work on marketing, work on business."

00:21:00,"Right? Way too general. Then when you get in the moment, as you already described, you react to what's going on, or worse yet you do what you feel like doing. Okay, you listen or you ask yourself, what do I feel like working on today? Okay. If I ask myself that question, I wouldn't, it would be nothing I don't feel like doing."

00:21:20,"I mean like, no, you can't, I Would just play with Monday boards all day. You would create zaps for your Monday boards and Then see that filled in already And then see if you can automate it even further. Could I create a droplet from my zap to get, yeah. So I mean, you would never feel like, so we wanna eliminate reactivity and like the emotional component of

what I feel like during the week."

00:21:44,"So we're doing that by planning ahead of time. So I'm listing out all of these tasks that I would like to accomplish this week. So I have a, just a list and it's really just a brain dump. It's, it's not, there's nothing formal here except that I'm making sure I get very specific and I'm not leaving anything open-ended, like work on my pricing."

00:22:05,"So I have this list of things I wanna do. And over here, on the other hand, I have my Google calendar with all of my calls that are already scheduled for the week. I then take everything that is on my list and I put it in the calendar at a specific time with a specific duration period. Okay, here's going to be your first piece of resistance."

00:22:28,"Ready for the first objection, Nicole. Yeah. I don't know how long this will take. So let's say for instance, you wanted to learn seo, like you wanna get better with SEO on your website. So you put on your task list seo, which is by the way, way too general. But you say, well, I Heather, I don't know how long it's gonna take to learn seo."

00:22:53,"Here's what I, here's what I'm doing. And I'm not even kidding you, I, I'm in control. I'm the boss, I'm the ceo. It's gonna take me six hours to learn seo. I'm just gonna decide that I'm going to maybe purchase a course or watch somebody that I trust on maybe YouTube or I'm going to seek out a resource, oh,"

00:23:13,"and here's what I'm gonna do. Or, Or come into the academy and watch our SEO class hosted by Angela Schneider in there. Okay, done. So that's done, That's an hour. So there you go. That's put on your calendar. There it is. That's an hour. Perfect. And join us then in March for our workshop, that's an hour to actually do your keywords."

00:23:30,"So yeah. So anyways, okay, two Hours Total hair, the dog academy.com/academy come join us. Okay, let me use a different example. Let's say I wanted to learn Google Analytics and I knew nothing about it. Oh Yeah. And I, I was like, what? I have no idea how long it's gonna take me, me to learn it."

00:23:45,"Could I find a course? Okay, here's what I would do. I would give myself 30, okay. Maybe 60 minutes to resource someone that I wanted to learn from. Yeah. Whether, again, that's YouTube for free or paying for course. Okay. Here I put that one hour on my calendar, find resource, and then I would give myself,"

00:24:05,"let's say just ease of math. Six hours. I'm gonna, I'm gonna give myself six hours to learn everything I can about it. Understanding I'm not looking to become the world's leading expert. I just need a base level knowledge. So I would take that six hours and I would distribute it over my schedule. If I wanted to get it done in a week,"

00:24:24,"I could do that. But if you needed to take two, that's fine. You would just, but the key here is you would schedule out each one of those hours on your calendar, specifically watch SEO training, watch Google Analytics training, and then it's done. Here's again, I'm gonna say this 50 times this episode until somebody tattoos it on their forehead."

00:24:47,"You are giving yourself entirely too much time to

get things done. You can simply decide the website is going to take me two hours and peer. And that's all you give yourself. And you focus and you get it done. I, and listen, I promise you, if you decided this is gonna take an hour, like if you only had an hour,"

00:25:09,"okay, let's say this. I said I'm going to steal all of your dogs. If you don't get this done in one hour, you would figure out a way to get it done in one hour. You would turn off all your notifications, you would not look at anything else. You would have incredible focus because it would be the only thing that you have time for that you're allowed to do is watch this particular training and you have one hour to get it done."

00:25:37,"You, here's what's happening besides giving yourself too much time is like you are just messing around all the time. Are you just spending too much time messing around doing things like, oh, but You don't even realize you're messing around? No. Because all of a sudden you're like, oh, that email just came in. That's it. That's yes. Oh,"

00:25:55,"oh, I need to respond to that on Facebook. Oh shit, it's been 20 minutes. Oh, like it's just, you're working but you're not focused. Correct. Because you're allowing other things to distract you because you give yourself too much time when you, you know, like you get that text message or maybe you read a news article, it's terrible."

00:26:13,"And then a client emailed me, I better reply, or a friend sent me a text. I have to give back to her immediately. But when you limit the time that you have to do something like, and you stick to it, it creates just a little bit of pressure. Like, like the type of pressure that causes you to focus more intensely."

00:26:31,"And it also, this is important. If you don't believe me on that, this is important. It will also help you get through all of the doubt. You will actually worry less because you won't have time. I'm pretty sure everyone's experienced this. Like think about when you're about to go on a vacation or you know, you're not gonna be in the office for a while and you're like,"

00:26:51,"oh my God, I've got all this stuff. Whether it's like, I have all this laundry to do, I have all this house stuff to do, I have all this dog stuff to do. I've got all this work stuff to do. Like, you get it done. Isn't that something? Are you sitting around like letting yourself go, go down little rabbit trails for other things?"

00:27:07,"No. You're like, no, I gotta get this done. I gotta get this done. And listen, we're not saying that your entire life is like, no, I can't. Yeah. Gotta get No, no, I can't. Like, like you're living in a box and you're not gonna like let anyone talk to you or send any texts back to anyone ever again."

00:27:21,"We're just talking about finding these focused time pieces on your calendar that do become, yeah, no, I'm blocking you out. Like I've taught my family mostly that when my office doors are closed, like no, no. Unless there's a bone sticking out of your skin or That's right. You are physically very badly broken. Like No, no, just wait."

00:27:42,"It can wait. Yeah. Yeah. So one thing I'm doing is I

have a, I have a smart watch. It's a garment, not an apple, but it still alerts me to things. So when I really wanna get in one of these focused hours, I take my watch off in my phone and my watch or in another room. Yeah."

00:28:00,"I just don't exist for that hour. You just, you just cannot get me for an hour. I mean, what, what do you think the worst that can happen is? Like, if somebody really needed to find you, they would find you. Yeah, yeah, yeah. For sure. Yeah. And I have a little routine for my focus time."

00:28:15,"It's the dog goes in a crate, I love her. But like, I can't focus on things when I have to redirect her from potentially like, you know, her being concerned, the FedEx guy's coming, I shut my door and I turn on my little brain music like little down tempo or a little like, you can Google brain music on YouTube and it's just like,"

00:28:34,"just helps you concentrate. And then that also is a cue. The more that you do it, it wires in those neural pathways. It becomes a cue for, oh, it's focus time. It's like when you were in preschool and it was nap time, it was like, we're gonna read a story, we're gonna turn down the lights. And the kids are like,"

00:28:52,"oh, it's nap time. So this is like, oh, it's focus time. I love that. I do the same thing. I have a playlist on Spotify and it's, it's a cue to your brain. Just like brushing your teeth is a cue that you're going to bed. Usually. Like, yeah, it's the same type of thing. But I mean,"

00:29:08,"I want you to think of it this way. Isn't it amazing when you have all day to do something and yet you do nothing, you know, you don't get Anything. Oh my God. That used to make me so angry because I would sit around, like if I didn't have, and I didn't realize what was happening so much of the time,"

00:29:22,"it would be like, I didn't have any hard deadlines, but I still had a whole bunch of stuff I wanted to get done for work. So I would sit in the computer and I'd get stuff done all day and do things, but then at the end of the day, I'm like, Hmm, what did I really do like, right. If,"

00:29:34,"if I wasn't going to actually get things done, like just take the day off and enjoy it and work the two hours. Like, yes, I, I like work, but I don't like wasting time at work when I could have been doing something else. Right. So that became a big eye-opener for me. One other thing I wanna mention too is that whole,"

00:29:52,"I'll do what I feel like doing kind of thing. Yes. Or the people I hear it all the time of, oh, you know, like waiting till I'm motivated to do that. Okay, here's a little secret. The motivation can actually be manufactured by actually starting to do it. Isn't that true? Because then, yeah, then you have this positive reinforcement loop."

00:30:12,"You feel good about yourself. You're like, man, I'm getting this done. And then you're like, you started to take whatever hard step it was. Maybe it was like, oh, I don't know where to start, but you just started. Yes. And then the path starts to become clearer and you're like, oh, I can do this."

00:30:24,"Oh, this is great. Oh, here we go. And all of a sudden you have motivation, but if you're just sitting at your desk, you're like hanging at your house and like, what's new on Netflix waiting for the motivation to come like light you

up to go to work. It's just not gonna happen. It's Not gonna happen. And I would say that the sentence,"

00:30:42,"I didn't feel like it or I don't feel like it, that sentence robs more people of their dreams than just about anything else. Because if I were reacting in the moment to my task list, which is what I ha, it used to be a task list to to-do list. I almost never feel like doing it. I mean, honestly. Well,"

00:31:01,"And the things you don't feel like doing, go to the bottom. Go to the bottom. And then how much, like for instance, like paying your quarterly sales tax, it's kind of a pain in the butt here if you don't like, cuz it's not really straightforward. So if I didn't have the loom video of like me reminding myself how to do it so I could quickly do it,"

00:31:18,"it was just like, I know it's gonna take more time than it should. I don't wanna waste time on that right now. And it's just down there in the bottom of your to-do list and what that is doing, even though it's not due yet. And when it comes down to like April 15th and I have to do it, I'll do it on April 14th,"

00:31:31,"but man, it's been sitting on that to-do list taking up mental bandwidth. That's it. For 30 days of me just knowing it's there and like having this like subconscious pressure of like, ah, God, I'm gonna have to do that. It is of robbing you, scheduling it and doing it. Yeah. It's robbing you of your time, your focus,"

00:31:49,"your energy, your attention, all because you haven't done it. Like it is not just that you left something undone on your to-do list, it is actually much more insidious than that. So knowing that what, you know, the whole goal here was to take the, to-do list off of the list itself and schedule the tasks individually. I just wanna,"

00:32:10,"before I get into that a little bit more, my resistance, I just wanna say two, two sentences. I think that rob people of their dreams that I didn't feel like it and I don't have time. Because the truth is you, you actually have too much time. You're giving yourself too much time to get things done. The reality is you have too much time."

00:32:32,"Well, and the the biggest thing for me doing this after about week two into week three, it became really clear what my priorities really were. Yep. Because it forces you to actually make decisions and be like, oh, is this a priority? If it is, I better figure out how to get it on this calendar instead of fooling myself that,"

00:32:56,"oh, this is a priority and this is a priority and this is a priority and this is a priority, and all of these things are priorities. And I had the story of, oh, as soon as I finish up that then I'll have time to do this. As soon as I get over that, then I'll have time to do this. That was a running reoccurring thought in my life of just like,"

00:33:14,"oh, as soon as, guess what, I'm never caught up. Right. It's never going to happen. I need to just accept that. Yes. And this allows me to really like, all right, what are my goals this week? Let's get it on the calendar. What are my long-term goals? When does that have to start getting scheduled?"

00:33:33,"Start scheduling it in. And then if there's not time

for the other things, all right, what's gonna give? Because my, I, I can't, I can't add more time. So it becomes really eye-opening. It is. And you essentially, you need, you said you need to stop fooling yourself. I said I needed to stop lying to myself."

00:33:51,"I mean, just flat out lying about what I was going to do. Because here's the thing, you can tell what your, what somebody values by what's on their schedule. Right. And if it wasn't on my schedule, I clearly didn't value it. Now I had this, I had these great lists, Nicole, I had lists for my lists With me too,"

00:34:08,"To-dos ideas. I had, I have visions, I have plans, I have projects, like you said, long-term term, short-term. And then there's the dailies to-dos and there's all of these things. And I was getting things done. I just, oh my gosh. I honestly believe that you and I with this shift have unlocked the next level of awesomeness in productivity that is going to skyrocket us."

00:34:32,"And it was because of this change to how we approached our scheduling in our calendar. Yes. Okay. I never did finish talking about my son. I Was gonna say, did you ever tell us exactly how long it took you? No. That was a really good mental Shift. Your brain just did, it's like, ooh, ooh, I don't wanna admit this."

00:34:50,"It's so embarrassing. Let's go into a tangent. I was able to make the, yeah, that was a pretty long tangent. I was able to make the list on the sheet of paper. This is the first Sunday afternoon. So I had my list, I had my laptop and my Google calendar, and I was like, okay, I'm simply just gonna plug these things in."

00:35:06,"Right. Should be easy. Yeah. I've boxer you probably four or five times over the course of at least four hours, at least minimum. Where I was like, Nicole, I can't do it. I, I'm sweating. I'm, this is, I have, my brain is resist, resist, resist. It's like, and here's why. Because I value freedom and flexibility."

00:35:28,"And my brain saw me putting these individual tasks on my calendar as, as like prison. Like, like slamming the door shot. The bars are closing. Like, you just lost all your freedom because you're putting, you're like not leaving any room. So I thought I was, I thought I had like, have my calls on the schedule and I have my to-do list,"

00:35:51,"and I I'm gonna manage it so beautifully, perfectly. That's what I thought for years. Yeah. No. So it took me for real. All afternoon Saturday afternoon, I was exhausted. I had to get a snack. I was like, so drained. I got everything scheduled and I, I was excited. But then I looked at my week and I was like,"

00:36:14,"there's literally not a minute. There's not one minute for me to do a, any, anything. What am I gonna do with this week solid like this. But here. So here's how I dealt with that resistance. I was like, Heather, give it one week. Like, just try it from one week. And so here's what I did."

00:36:37,"I actually printed it out just so I could, I wanted to see it on paper. And I sent it to you and I said, this is the craziest thing I've ever done. But what I'm going to do is every day, my only goal is to obey my schedule. There's no

thinking allowed. There's no like, like I said to myself,"
00:36:58,"I'm not kidding you. I said, Heather, your feelings are irrelevant. I don't care how you feel. I, I'm really tough on myself. Very limited compassion. Something my therapist thinks I need to work on. But we could fight about that later. But my only goal was to obey the calendar. And then every day I decided I would write at the bottom how closely I followed it in terms of percent."

00:37:20,"My goal was to follow it 100% of the time. But I wasn't like, listen, if Somebody, you weren't gonna make it mean anything about you or judge yourself partially or Yeah, Correct. Exactly. Because as we'll find out in the upcoming weeks, some things did happen. So yeah, I put mine on a Monday board where I could then make anything."

00:37:36,"I did green. Oh, that made me happy. Oh, that's nice. And it turned red if I didn't. Oh, Yeah. Which is like alarm. Yeah. So every day I wrote at the bottom of the calendar, and that week was 100% every day. I followed that calendar 100% every single day. I was really proud of that."

00:37:54,"But next I gave myself a rating. I was looking at it like in Lightroom, you know how you have stars, you can give anything from one to five stars. So I gave myself a rating on every day of how the day felt, like, what was my energy level like? And it was from one to five. And that first week,"

00:38:12,"four days were five outta five stars. Like I felt great. Yeah. One day was a four outta five. I, I had just scheduled a little too much and felt a little depleted. But I tried that first week. And I feel like you, you were, you were out of pocket that week, were You? Yeah. Oh, I was in Orlando for global."

00:38:32,"Yeah. Yeah. You weren't around. So I was doing it, but I I was telling you what I was doing. Right, right. Because you said, oh, I'm going to do that when I get back. Yeah. Because it was the following week. Right. So then that following week, you and I kind of worked on this together."

00:38:46,"And how was that for you? That first I had that same major resistance and that first day was hard. I remember I did it, I had like a couple hours, I think I had two hours like waiting for my family. Cause they were driving down to Ocala after I drove up to Orlando. And I got it done mostly in two hours."

00:39:07,"Actually. I got some more done on the drive home. But it was, yeah, it was same thing. So much resistance, which when you have so much resistance to something, I mean, there's resistance where it's like major value conflict. Like I know this is morally wrong. Like I can't do this. All right. Yeah. Listen to that resistance."

00:39:26,"But when it's a resistance, like, oh, this could be really awesome, but, oh God no. Like if there's a really awesome on the other side of that, like you might wanna push through that resistance and it could be strong. I mean, both of us were like, oh my God, this is insane. It was really, really strong."

00:39:46,"And I would say this, this type of resistance is good when you recognize that it's really, I just wanted to avoid being uncomfortable. Yeah. It was just discomfort. And I thought to myself, well, I can practice being uncomfortable to

try something new. Just and remember this is just a test. I don't know. Yeah. No one said you have to do it for the rest of your life."

00:40:07,"Right. We both went into this saying, I'm gonna test it for a week. I'm gonna refine it for a couple weeks. And at the end of a month, which is where we're at right now, we're gonna take a hard look at this and ask her. And by the way, it, it's not even, I'm not even asking myself like,"

00:40:23,"well how did that feel to you? I have my ratings. I wrote down how it felt to me. And I started, some days I even started to journal about it, like what the day was like and what I could do better. Like for instance, I learned that I need to give myself at least some bathroom breaks. Yeah. Yeah."

00:40:41,"And maybe some food. Maybe some food. No, I have lunch scheduled, cuz that's when I watched training videos. Oh, Okay. Right, right, right. Lunch was definitely scheduled, but I did figure out about a week in, I added something. I'm calling flex time to my schedule. And flex time typically for me is later in the day when my energy and my productivity is lower."

00:41:05,"It's j I work best in the morning. So you gotta figure out, you know, where you work best. But around when I get my son off the bus from like three till like dinner, I've marked a lot of that as flex time. Which means this, I can work if I want, but I can also take time off or do something around the house."

00:41:23,"So the hence the word flex time. This is important because it is different than free time and rest time. And it's also different. I've realized that I needed, we started calling it catch up time and I'm like, no, I don't like that. It's telling me I'm behind. Yes. So I call it bonus time, which is basically just a little bit of room I leave in my calendar to deal with the things that pop up during the week."

00:41:48,"Like maybe my team needs me to do something. Maybe there's something I forgot that really is very important that then it's just, it's bonus time. Like it's already has a spot there. Cause I realized that after the first week, it was like, oh, I mean, I planned out things, but I, I can't, I can't foresee some things that really will need my attention and can't wait till next week's schedule."

00:42:09,"And yeah, like adding that flex time. The other thing we realized too is we need to have at least 30 minutes of admin time a day of like email. Yes. You know, that kind of stuff because you, you still have to catch up with some of those, but it's important to have that schedule so you're not spending the whole day reacting from that email or spending the whole day just like looking at the same email."

00:42:29,"I, I almost have no reactivity time in my, first of all, don't schedule reactivity time except admin catch up. That's kind of different bonus. I love that word. Yeah. But there, I, I can't re it must have been the second week when something came up with Evan. It was the Hopewell it was the school. It was,"

00:42:47,"yeah. It was that whole situation. There was a second shooter hoax at my son's high school. I actually did a podcast in the Flourish Academy about it. Really good. You

definitely, it's called the second Arrow. It's really good. But that, that day I was like, Ooh, okay. This is, oh my gosh, something is wrong with me."

00:43:04,"Okay. When that happened, I said to you, oh my gosh, this is, this is a good time to practice my skills. I I have the rest of the afternoon scheduled and I'm not gonna be able to do it because I had to pick him up. I had to rescue him from the school. It was this whole situation. And at the end of the day,"

00:43:22,"I had not followed it a hundred percent because there was something that I had to react to. Oh, a Hundred percent. Yeah. And then it was a question of how do you manage this? Well this is so interesting because it, it actually showed me something I didn't realize, which was when I am so disciplined with this schedule and something comes up,"

00:43:44,"I am not driven by stress or anxiety about, oh my gosh, I'm not gonna get that done. I'm just like, no, I'm just gonna schedule it here. And because I trust schedule and myself and I'm obeying it, it, it like wasn't an issue. It was so strange. I don't know. It just, where Before you can just look at it."

00:44:03,"You can just look at the next day and be like, all right, let's just, it's time to reevaluate. Re just reschedule things. Like is there something here that needs to get bumped next week? Cuz something yesterday has to get done that I didn't get done. That's It. You just redistribute. But when you trust that you're getting things, see,"

00:44:18,"previous to that, I would've been all kinds of been outta shape and angry because I would've thought, oh my gosh, when am I gonna get all this stuff done? I don't have enough time. And I, and I just didn't because I didn't have a system I think that I fully trusted or believed would help me accomplish my goals. And now that I do,"

00:44:34,"I am, oh my gosh. Like anxiety gone, stress gone. Like light years of where I was just a month ago testing out a system that I was resisting so strong. And then I told you Easter week you were in Belize and then it was Easter and you know, and the kids and the schedules and everything. It, it kind of went sideways and I didn't get as much planned and scheduled and I actually really,"

00:45:03,"really disliked it. Yeah, same. I had Morgan had to do a whole separate podcast on last minute changes and managing unexpected things because my week, my week number two when I was doing this completely blew up with our Belize trip and our Airbnb. We were staying in getting canceled 72 hours before we were supposed to go. But header, there's one thing I do well under pressure,"

00:45:27,"it is book of vacation. So we will cover, it's Fine. Yeah. But anyway, it definitely tested me as well. And instead of, which before Nicole might have been like, oh see, it doesn't work. Forget it. It's just not enough flexibility. Oh yes. But I was like, no, no, this is just, and I actually kind of laughed."

00:45:46,"I'm like, it's just, just getting tested to see if I really wanna continue trying this. You did do that cuz you messaged me and you said you were laughing about it. You're like, I, I see I'm being tested here and I recognize it

because both of us did that. Our brains both went to, okay, see that was just novel."

00:46:05,"You did it for a week. It was just new. So of course it worked. And now here's back to real life. We both had a similar thought like that laughed at it. And, and I said no. Like this is life and I, but I'm better positioned to manage it now. I'm, this discipline has set me up for success for the unexpected in the times when I have to be reactive."

00:46:29,"But I am not living that way. I'm in control. I'm, I'm looking at my schedule from this week. This week was extraordinarily busy and I, I am and it flew by and I'm so proud of what I accomplished and I'm looking at my daily rates. A hundred percent. A hundred percent followed it 100% of the time every day. Except one was a five out five that day was actually a two out five."

00:46:57,"Hmm. Interesting. It's the lowest score I've given myself on how I felt about the day. But you know what this does, it gives me the ability, the space to look back at the day and ask why and then I just don't do that again. Right, right. Hey Louis. Yeah. Just scheduled too much. You start to learn what your limits are."

00:47:16,"And the other thing that this has been life changing for me is okay, yeah, I have my calls and stuff scheduled in there and in the past I would try to like preschedule blocks of like, I'm gonna work on the podcast here, I'm gonna do this here, I'm gonna do that here. And it would come and go and I'd schedule something over cause I'm like,"

00:47:35,"I'll just move that. And I wasn't being in integrity to my own schedule. So that is huge and that is something you need to commit to when doing this. But what I've started doing now is whenever I am working on something, I'm like, oh, I'm gonna have to do on, I'm gonna have to work on that or whatever. I know there's some sort of task or something that's gonna be required to me in the future."

00:47:56,"I just go to my calendar and I schedule it. Isn't that And then if it comes, yeah. And if it comes closer, yeah. Okay. I can maybe move it slightly. Like if something comes up that Thursday and I schedule it three weeks out, yeah I'll just move to Friday. Like whatever. But I know that it's there. I know it needs to get done somewhere around that timeframe."

00:48:12,"And then that also, oh hello prevents my other things. Cuz before what was happening, I was the opposite of the profit first type thing where you like, you pay yourself first. It was like I had all my open space and I would let people keep scheduling things and then try to put my stuff in in between where this is now letting me like,"

00:48:31,"oh, okay, I know I'm gonna need to work on this bonus for the C P P A course. Let me put it in my calendar right now. And I know when that's getting done. I know I need to do this project for the academy. Let me put it in here. It gets done. I know I wanna start our YouTube channel again."

00:48:45,"Let me put some brainstorming time in the, in the calendar and then let me put some actual filming time in the calendar like, and then the week comes and I just, oh, that's already scheduled. Great. You know, it's like, yes. It becomes so much easier and it helps prevent you from getting, just

allowing the rest of the world to take over your time before you do the important things for your,"

00:49:07,"for your goals. Yeah. Because you're the CEO and this is revolutionary because you are putting things on the calendar ahead of time. You're staying in integrity, you're obeying the schedule. I wake up every day and I, it's funny, I do this with my workout too. I dread my workout and every morning I say Heather, just go do what the guy tells you."

00:49:27,"And this is what I say about my schedule, my job only job is to obey my schedule. Once it's been set. Now I'm not like incredibly rigid, I will make adjustments. But to your point, I'm putting things out further ahead now and I'm having more trust in myself that it's going to get done. Which releases the anxiety, pressure, stress from my brain,"

00:49:47,"reduces the overwhelm. It's just not there because I know it's coming now. The first week I did it, the only thing on my calendar that week were my calls because it was the first week. Now as I'm doing my weeks, there are some things on my schedule that I had put on, you know, last week or the week prior and I gotta,"

00:50:03,"I love it. We scheduled our power hours for the rest of the year. We also scheduled a monthly podcast recording for the rest of the year. So you guys will have plenty of Heather guest. Amazing. And oh my god, it's amazing. Yeah, just to note that that's all there. And again, like something came up, I was like,"

00:50:21,"oh, this on my, okay Heather, I'm the August Power Hour podcast. We bump back an hour. Yeah, sure. Okay, great. Done. You know, so it's, it's unbelievable. And speaking of power hours, we are actually going to be doing on May 10th, which is Wednesday at 1:00 PM Eastern, we are going to be doing a free workshop on the power hour for everyone in the community,"

00:50:43,"everyone that wants to come join us about how you can start to implement this a little bit in your world. We're gonna take a goal, break it down put it in the calendar, like just really help you kind of test this process out for yourself if you would like to see what all the fuss is about. Actually, I have written out a very specific exercise for that power hour."

00:51:04,"So it's not just, we're going to be taking what you learned today and just kind of chit chat about it and try to No, no, no, no, no, no. Come prepared to work. I have steps and a process, and we're gonna walk through, it together's a very detailed exercise on helping you implement this. So, you know,"

00:51:23,"this is the groundwork, that's what today was, and join us in the power hour. And I will be there to walk you through the exercise, but also help you with the objections that your brain tries to present you with. There's gonna be a few, A few, right? There's gonna be a lot of, you're gonna have a lot of reasons,"

00:51:45,"excuses why this doesn't work. And, and my, my answer to that is like, listen, okay, I know everybody has a different life, I respect that. But if the resistance is just that you're going to be uncomfortable, I wanna challenge you to try it for a minimum of a week and just kind of refine it

and see what you think."

00:52:05, "Actually, I wanna say a minimum of a month, because the first week is just a test and then the month is where you start. And the second week will blow up on your face and then the third week you start to fill your start to get your groove back. And the fourth week you're like, I'm never going back. Correct. That's exactly right."

00:52:19, "So I really do think you need to give it a a month just to see, but you know, take some pressure off of yourself. You don't have to do this perfectly and you don't have to do it like the way Nicole and I suggest, but the way I approach things I'm testing or learning is I just go all in so that I can find what works and sort of,"

00:52:39, "you know, discern what doesn't. And so when somebody teaches me something, like, I learned this from my mentor, I just went all in. I did ex okay, Heather, that's a lie. There's one thing I need to do better and not schedule more free time during the week. Like I really think I'm, I'm overloading my brain just a wee bit."

00:53:01, "And that, yeah, We talked about this this week. You had that two days of very busy calls, very busy brain activity, and you're like, by the end of the day, I couldn't. Yeah, I was boxing you that evening and the only word I could come up with was depleted. Yeah. I was just, yeah. Cause here,"

00:53:18, "here's the thing with this calendar too, like we can't do, our brains are not wired to do like the big, heavy, deep work for six hours a day. So when we said like, get rid of the distractions, we're not talking about the whole entire workday. We're talking about, hey, like this is one that I really need to focus on."

00:53:33, "Let's shut it down, let's get that done. And then, all right, the admin stuff. But you know, you still need to get that done. But like, okay, you're allowed to have your phone back to text someone back real quick, right. And then jump back into your QuickBooks, whatever you're working on. But Yeah, we're talking about one hour."

00:53:47, "One hour. Yeah. Yeah. One hour blocks of work. Or some people even say 45 minutes is better for The Yeah, but no more than 90 minutes generally if this work. Yeah. And without taking a break, you can come back if you need to. Yeah. But usually 90 minutes is all that our brains can handle of like really focusing and then you just,"

00:54:04, "you need, you need to take a few minutes away or something that's way less involved. Alright, I wanna wrap this up because we've been chatting about this. We could chat a lot long time about this stuff. It's so good. But anyway, I hope this inspires you to come join us on May 10th. Just go to [hair of the dog academy.com/community](http://hair.of.the.dog.academy.com/community)."

00:54:23, "If you're not a member of our community yet, you can join us right inside that community. The replay will also be posted there as well. Like Heather said, it's going to be a workshop. We are going to work. It's not just gonna be us teaching things we're gonna actually implement with you. So we would love to see you there. Bye everybody."

00:54:42, "Thanks for listening to The Hair of the Dog podcast. This was episode number one 90. If you wanna check out the

show notes for access to any of the resources that we mentioned, simply go to www.hairofthedogacademy.com/nineteen. 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,"
00:55:06,"don't forget to subscribe so you don't miss our upcoming episodes. One last thing. If you are ready to dive into more resources, head over to our website@www.hairofthedogacademy.com. Thanks for being a part of this pet photography community."